AMBASSADOR JOHN GUNTHER DEAN

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

Initial Interview Date; September 6, 2000

Q. Today is September 6, 2000. This is an interview with John Gunther Dean. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. Let's start at the beginning. Could you tell me when and where you were born and something about your family.

DEAN: Okay. I was born on February 24, 1926 in the German city of Breslau, an industrial city of 650,000 people, where they made locomotives, airplanes. Silesia is one of the two lungs of Germany: the Ruhr Valley and Silesia. My father was a corporation lawyer who was on the Board of Directors of banks, chairman of a machine-tool company, mining corporations, etc... He was close to many of the leading industrial and financial people in Germany, in the period between the First World War and the Second World War. My father was also the President of the Jewish Community in Breslau. His friend Max Warburg played the same role in Hamburg.

Q. Was this the banking Warburg.

DEAN: That's right. Max Warburg was the head of the banking house at that time. Sigmund was his nephew who went to England.

Q. "Dean" was ...

DEAN: My father changed our name legally by going to court in New York

in March 1939. My father's name was Dr. Josef Dienstfertig. You will find his name in books listing the prominent men in industry and finance at the time. One interesting anecdote was the trip of my late father to Palestine in the late 1920s. He, Mr. Warburg, Mr. Goldschmidt and others were invited to attend the opening of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. All the representatives of the Jewish community in Germany said the same thing: "We are German citizens of Jewish faith. We are not Zionists. We will help you, but we are part of an assimilated society." I mention this here, because this approach to religion had a great impact on my own attitude toward Zionism.

Q: I want to go back a bit. Breslau was...

DEAN: Breslau is a city which used to be in the 13th, 14th, and 15th century Polish. It then became Austrian. It then became Prussian when Frederick the Great defeated Austria in the 1740s. My father's family had been living there for the last 500 years, and we have records to that effect. The reason that Jews had been living there for such a long time is that they were probably descendents of the Kazars who were allowed to settle in about 1500 or so in Neustadt in Silesia, and later were allowed to move to the big cities. They lived there quietly. In the city of Breslau, where I was born, we had nine Nobel Prize winners, from the beginning of the 20th century to 1933. More than half of the Nobel Prize winners were Jewish. But they were all very assimilated Jews. They Included Paul Ehrlich, Fritz Haber etc... who were part of the German establishment. Along that line, I have in my possession a book given to my father in 1899. It is inscribed as follows; "This prize of the Emperor to the best student in town".

The idea of belonging to a nation, being part of a community, and your religion being between yourself and your maker, was absolutely cardinal in my upbringing.

Q: What about your mother's background.

DEAN: It was completely different. My mother was the daughter of a well to do banker by the name of Ashkenaczy living in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Her father's cousin, Simon Ashkenaczy, converted (with a name like Ashkenaczy) to Catholicism. In 1920, he became the first Polish Ambassador to the Court of St. James. After being stationed from 1920 to 1926 in London, he served from 1926 to 1932 as Polish Ambassador to the League of Nations in Geneva. My mother's cousin became Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Poland in Warsaw. That is my mother's background. My mother's sisters and brothers got married all over the world.

Q: This was on your mother's side.

DEAN: Yes, my mother's oldest brother came to France in 1917 and fought in the war. Today, I have a French cousin who was honored by having bestowed on him the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor by the President of France. He was a hero in the Free French Resistance Movement. He then became an Ambassador in the French Diplomatic Service.

Another first cousin went to England and attended Oxford, He ended up as Chairman of British Petroleum Chemicals. Another cousin is Dr. Petersdorf. In the early 1980s he was Chairman of the Association of American Medical Schools. He served as Chairman of Medicine at Harvard, Dean of Medicine in California. That Is my mother's family. This family, Ashkenaczy, goes back to Amsterdam. They came from Amsterdam to what

was the Austro-Hungarian Empire in about 1702. They never, like my father's family, stayed in one place very long. I still have family living in Europe. Some of them are Catholics, others Jews. The only lesson I learned from my own past was that tolerance is important. I listen with respect to other peoples' views and I consider religion to be a personal relationship between myself and one's God.

Q: How religious was homelife for you.

DEAN: Not very religious. For the first four years of my life, I attended a rather exclusive private school. That was the end of that cycle. Afterwards, I had a Swiss tutor at my house, Mr. Pezet, and an English governess, Eleanor Mary McCarthy, so I would learn English. I also had a French teacher come to our home. Once a week, I had somebody come to the house to teach me religion. I was able to read Hebrew. While attending school at the age of 7 or 8, I had a friend who said to me one day: "My mom tells me I shouldn't go home with you; we shouldn't walk together." I said: "Why." "Oh, because you are Jewish. But never mind. We are buddies. We are going to play soccer together." I am mentioning this because some survivors of the Nazi persecution claim today that all Germans were nazis and anti-semites. From my Limited I found this not to be true. We left Germany in 1938.

Q: Let's-talk about growing up. 1926. So, in 1932, you were six years old or so. What were your personal observations of the Hitlerzeit as far as how they gradually impacted on you.

DEAN: I was very young at the time. It impacted relatively little. I went from 1932 to 1936 to this private school for four years where there were only two Jews. That was the end of the cycle. At that point, I shifted and I had tutors at home. I assume the reason was that I could not go to the Kaiser Wilhelm Gymnasium.

Q: This was just when the Nuremberg laws were passed.

DEAN: The Nuremberg laws were in 1935.

Q: They were beginning to bite.

DEAN: The Prussian Jews had received citizenship In 1742. They were eager to be part of the nation. They assimilated and inter-married. They also converted at times. Making a contribution to their country was important to them. They did this in spades. They lived their lives as Germans. Today, some people carry their religion on their sleeve. It becomes their identity. This was not the case of my family. They wanted to be part of the nation. I brought that concept of life very much with me.

Q: Were you picking anything up from your family about Hitler and what was happening - at the dinner table?

DEAN: No, because my father always believed (and so did my uncles) "It's going to blow over." I won't say my father was part of it, but he was close to the "Herrenclub". The Herrenclub were the people who helped Hitler coming to power. They were the industrialists and bankers who decided that having to choose between communism and this crazy fellow Hitler, they said: "We can control this paper hanger." My father remained until his death a carrier of German civilization, German culture. In order to please my father, I took a one-year survey course of German literature. Then, my father said to me: "You are not a complete human being unless you have read Faust." So, I studied half a year "Faust" at Harvard. My father always claimed that I had German roots. Therefore, I should learn about German culture. Certainly, my father

was disappointed in the way some Germans behaved. Others were very helpful. My father never had any hatred or ill feeling toward Germany. In 1938, I saw the concierge come up to our apartment and shout: "Herr Doktor, Herr Doktor, Sie kommen. Du must raus" which means: "Doctor, they are coming, you must go." The Gestapo were coming to pick him up. The concierge was trying to protect my father. Another uncle was held as a hostage at Buchenwald in 1938 for ransom before he could leave Germany. The head of the Breslau police force was helpful to another uncle in getting him a visa in order to leave Germany because he had been awarded the Iron Cross first class during World War I. I think what happened to the German Jews (I'm not saying it about others) was the great effort they made to be assimilated into the German nation. For example, note the role the Jews played during the period of Romanticism (1830s) in German literature. The matter of faith was between yourself and your maker. The number of Jews who won the Nobel Prize for Germany in every field was amazing. There was no question of loyalty to another nation. Palestine became important for Zionists during the Hitler period as a destination for rapid emigration. There was a tremendous difference (and very few people ever talked about it) between the effort of the assimilation of German Jews and the Jews in some other countries who were never allowed to be part of a nation, as for example in Russia.

Q. This was reflected very much, say, in New York, where the German Jews were part of the establishment. When all of these people came out of Eastern Europe at the turn of the century, these were country cousins and they were not well appreciated.

DEAN: The German Jews who came to the U.S. in 1848 often inter-married and became part of the American scene. They went out West. They became

merchants. They started as peddlers and ended up owning department stores.

Q: Sure, like Goldwater and all that.

DEAN: These people became part of the country. They assimilated. Today, In the 21st century, many young Jewish men marry non-Jewish girls. According to Jewish law, the faith of the children is decided by the mother. This is one of the problems the Orthodox and ultra-conservative Jews have in the U.S., saying: "Hey, wait a second! in the melting pot of America, we are melting away." Reformed Judaism can live with that. The Orthodox cannot. This may lead to Orthodox Jews emigrating to Israel or in Israel questioning the validity of marriages performed by reformed Rabbis.

Q: When did you leave Germany?

DEAN: 1938.

Q: It was a good time to get the hell out.

DEAN: It was more the influence of my mother who made us pull up roots. My father believed that it might still blow over.

Q: In 1938, you went where.

DEAN: To Holland.

Q: How long were you in Holland?

DEAN: About three or four weeks. My father had friends there. They were together on the board of a mining corporation in Greece. They

played a role later in my father's life. Then, we went to England. We went to see our governess. From there, we took the S.S. Queen Mary for the United States.

Q: That would be when.

DEAN: At the beginning of February 1939. I have a daughter-in-law who came on the Mayflower. When I went to the wedding, I said: "You know, I feel sorry for your ancestors. They spent six long weeks on that ocean, being tossed around. I came in five days. It was very smooth sailing." But we both got there!

One of the first things we did when we arrived in the U.S. was to go to court. We petitioned the court to change the name of Dienstfertig to Dean. That was done. I have kept this paper very preciously for over 60 years. At that point, we became known as "Dean". In early 1939 my father got an offer to do some sporadic teaching at the University of Kansas. He did a few lectures and then got a job in Kansas City, Missouri. The family moved to Kansas City, Missouri in 1939.

Kansas City played a major role in my life. Let me cite an example. My father was a very polite gentleman. One Saturday afternoon, we went to town in a streetcar. My father was sitting next to a white lady and he saw a black lady coming in. She had done her Saturday shopping and carried a couple of bags. My father, in his European manner, tipped his hat, got up, and tried to give his seat to the black lady. Well, in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1939, it was the custom for black folks to go to the back of the car. My father giving up his seat for a black woman was unheard of. The white lady objected. She said: "Why, you . . . . ." and used very foul language about my father and his relationship with blacks.

The streetcar conductor said: "Fellow, you take your boy and get off that streetcar. I don't want no trouble on that streetcar." He stopped right there and then, and we had to get off. It was not even a regular street car stop.

My father was Involved in a debate when Mr. Lindberg came to Kansas. It was 1940. The war had broken out in Europe in September 1939. Congress had passed the "Lend/Lease Bill "to help the allies. My father wanted the allies to win. Lindberg favored staying out of war.

Q: Lindberg was part of the America First movement and kept saying: "Germany is our best customer" and all that sort of thing.

DEAN: He was quite friendly to the fascist regime. That ended my father's very short teaching career at Kansas University. We lived in Kansas City, Missouri. I first went to junior high-school and then to high school. One of the teachers, an English teacher, said: "John, you want to go to college, don't you?" I replied: "Yes, I want to go to college." "Where do you want to go?" I replied: "I want to go to Harvard." "You want to go to Harvard? We have never sent anybody to Harvard from this high school. I'll tell you, John, if you are really serious, you read one play of Shakespeare a week - extra assignment.

Every time you come across a word you don't know, you look it up in the Webster dictionary and write out the definition. Then, you give me one page on what you think of the play." I did this for just about a year. Miss Seacrest, rest her soul in peace, never got a nickel for it, never received any real expression of gratitude from anybody, but she got me into Harvard. I was able to pass the Eastern College Boards.

I am eternally grateful to her. That particular woman and her action and her willingness to help a young student influenced my actions later in my life. When I came into a position where I could be of help to others, I did. I sit on a board today in the Far East, of a university entirely devoted to science and technology. We only have masters and Ph.D. students. I pleaded for scholarships for young Vietnamese, a country where I had fought for 2 years. I pleaded for scholarships for Cambodians where I had played a major role in their country. I pleaded for scholarships for people from Laos and I got them altogether about 300 scholarships. I feel today that the Kansas City tradition of openness and tolerance, and giving young people a chance, had become part of my own outlook on life.

I would like to mention something else. In Kansas City, we attended a congregation. You wouldn't know whether it was a congregation of Christians or Jews. It was a meeting hall. When the Christian Science Church burnt down about two blocks away, we offered our meeting hall to them and they used it on Sundays. It was reformed Judaism. It followed the Cincinnati Rite. I was the only one in my age group in the congregation who could still read Hebrew. All my colleagues didn't know a word of it. We got confirmed together.

Q: Not a Barmitzah.

DEAN: No. It was a confirmation. I had the honor of reading the Ten Commandments, in Hebrew. I was the only one who could read that language. Some of my fellow confirmees went with me to Harvard. Most of them had gone to private preparatory schools. I had gone to public high school. Yes, Kansas City was a good place to grow up. While in Kansas City, I became a Boy Scout.

Q: You basically came into high school from Germany.

DEAN: Well, into junior high school.

Q: How did you find the adjustment? I'm just talking about the system.

DEAN: First rate. In Germany, I had an English governess, so the English language was not the big problem. The problem was that I did not know much about the American way of life. That was new to me. Mind you, I think every immigrant, whether they come from Latin America or Scandinavia or from the Orient, emphasis is on adjusting and being part of the gang. I learned to play baseball. I ran track for the school races. I played basketball. I was not good enough to become a member of the school team, but I participated in every sport. What struck me the most was that if you did your homework and you were willing to do a little extra reading, you could prepare yourself for college. In that effort, I found that most of the teachers were willing to help a student who was interested in learning. I also went to the public library to read and select books.

Q: We have a wonderful library system in the United States.

DEAN: I used it. Sixty years later, I still remember Miss Lewis, the librarian. She knew my past. She said: "John, what do you want to read now?" I said: "I want to read more about Alexander Hamilton." She said: "Alexander Hamilton is more authority-oriented. Why don't you read about Madison also?" I got interested in America's past. At that point, my father started collecting the original editions of books about the American Revolution. The books are still in my

possession. In some of them are the drawings of Benjamin Franklin. Another series include Jefferson's memoirs, etc. He bought those books because he had great respect for the Founding Fathers of our country, I got interested in American history. For my father, it was more a question of learning about a new civilization. For me, it was learning more about my country. At this point, I began to think about ways I might be of service to my new country. Doing something for my country became a goal to be pursued over a lifetime. Nobody could change my mind. My father wanted me to go into banking. One of the last German Chancellors before Hitler was Heinrich Bruning. Heinrich Bruning was a friend of my father, so my father wrote him with the hope he could help me. In 1947 Bruning had suggested that I should go to Bering Brothers in London and learn about banking. "You'll get to be a good banker. Your father was chairman of a bank, so a career in finance makes sense." I replied that "I wanted to become a Foreign Service officer." He said: "Where did you ever get that strange idea? You'll never make it. Foreign-born, with all the baggage you carry..." I said: "I'm not interested in money per se. I would like to serve. I would like to do something for somebody."

Q: Let's go back. You were interested in the American Revolution. Did you read the Kenneth Roberts book ."Rebels in Arms"? This was a historical novel.

DEAN: No, I read more biographies about historical figures and the issues they were involved in. The Middle West in those days was quite different from today's; nobody locked their front door. You left your car unlocked. I had a paper route. Neighbors sometimes complained: "I did not get my paper" and I had to rush over and give them the latest newspaper. It was a nice environment. It was an open, caring society, and a very tolerant

one. People did what they wanted to do. I enjoyed school. Today, I am told that the high school I attended is closed.

From Kansas city, my folks at one point moved back East. I went off to Harvard and I did not return to Missouri,

Q: During this time you were in Kansas City, was the family following events in Europe? How much were you involved? This was a great drama.

DEAN: In May 1940, I remember sitting in the dining room with a radio on the table. We were listening to H.G. Kaltenborn who reported on the surrender of France. It was General Hutzinger, the French general, who actually handed over the surrender document in the railroad car, to the German generals. My late mother, who had family in France, was crying. I understood at that point how attached she was to her family. I realized how meaningful was to her the defeat of France, the France she knew and loved. Her tears at that moment made a big impression on me. From that point on, I was hoping I would get as much education as possible and the war would last long enough so I could get into war and do my duty to my country and for the values it stands. This actually happened. I was in a hurry. I finished high school in June 1942. I was barely 16.

Q: You went to Harvard. Where did you get the idea of Harvard?

DEAN: As a child, I heard a lot about universities. My father had a doctorate and everybody in the family was well-educated. Harvard had the reputation of being the number one school in the U.S. Then, there was my father's friend. Dr. Bruning, who was teaching at Harvard. It never occurred to me that I should apply to several universities in case

of being rejected. Also, I had not heard of so many other schools. Harvard was, as far as I could see, the best. The difficulty was how to get in and how to pay for it. My father paid part of the tuition and part of it I had to earn. I waited on tables my first year.

Q: Where? In one of the houses?

DEAN: Yes, As a Freshman I lived in Wigglesworth, B. Entry. I served at tables at Winthrop House, which was not my house. Later, I also served as an usher at football games so I could see, free of charge, the football game. Ambassador Arthur Hartman, with whom I was at Harvard, remembers me. "Hey, John, I remember when you were selling laundry contracts." Arthur had bought one of my laundry contracts, which gave me an income. The second year, I had better jobs. I had moved up. I must admit that most people were nice and helped me.

Q: You adjusted quite well - at the right age - to the American system. In the European one, you don't work; you don't -

DEAN: In Germany, I was too young for higher education. In Germany, I was exposed to the concept of serving the state. Undoubtedly that idea stayed with me all during my school years in the U.S. The name "Dienst" means "service". Somehow, "serving" became important to me and how to prepare myself to serve. I got the idea of serving in the field of international relations. Most of my elders thought this was crazy. They said: "How can you make a name for yourself in diplomacy?" It was not common in those days for immigrants to enter the Diplomatic Service of the U.S.

I think we should talk about the war years because the war years were absolutely of key importance to me.

Q: Let's talk about Harvard and the war years. First, at Harvard, when you went there in 1942, what were you taking? You were 16 years old.

DEAN: The first year there was no choice. You took the required subjects. I made fairly good grades. Among other subjects, I took during my Freshman year English composition, world history, French, and science. But when I entered in 1942, some students were already leaving Harvard to join the armed forces. I was young - 16 - and had two more years before joining our military forces. Most of us who stayed at Harvard in 1942 and 1943 were eager to get as much education as possible before leaving for the war. I recall vividly, I was at the movies in Harvard Square when Field Marshal von Paulus surrendered an entire German army to the Soviets at Stalingrad in the beginning of 1943. It was the turning point of the war on the Eastern Front and the audience applauded at the end of the Newsreel.

Q: Von Paulus commanded the Sixth Army?

DEAN: Yes, that was a big event. I recall the image of the old Marshal von Paulus holding his Marshal staff high as he surrendered the whole Sixth Amy. I was worried that the war was going to end too soon for me to have made my contribution,

Q: Also, El Alamein had happened about that time.

DEAN: At that time, the Kansas City Star ran a story with a picture of my first cousin who had fought in North Africa. That is the fellow who received the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor in September 2001. He was the hero of the battle of Bir Hakeim, which was the first battle that the Free French won.

Q: This was part of the North Africa campaign...

DEAN: That's right. The French held the line against German and Italian forces, but needed ammunition. My cousin was a truck driver bringing badly needed ammunition to Bir Hakeim. The German Junker planes came to bomb the munitions convoy. The truck in front of my cousin got hit and started blowing up. He took his fire extinguisher and put out some of the fires until he was blown up himself. The convoy got through and he was left on the battlefield for dead. Scottish soldiers came to clean up the battlefield. They saw the 20-year old lad in a puddle of blood and gave him a direct blood transfusion. He lost his right arm at that battle and also lost two fingers on his left hand. He has three fingers left.

In 1944, I volunteered for induction into the Army. Born in Germany, I was classified by the draft board as an enemy alien and could not be drafted. I did not want to miss the show, so I volunteered for induction.

I left Harvard and drove to Fort Devins, Massachusetts, in 1944. There, I was processed as a private. In reply to a certain question, I made a boo boo.

Q: You were saying you made a boo boo.

DEAN: Yes, I was asked to sign up for a $10.000 GI insurance in case of death. So, I told the officer:
"I am the only child and my parents would not need $10,000 if I am dead. I don't want to take out this insurance. I prefer to get the $21 a month a private is entitled to."
"Step aside. Dean."
So, I stepped aside. Half an hour later, "Have you changed your mind, Dean?" No. I didn't. "My parents still would not be happy with $10,000 in case of my death."

Well, I never took out the $10,000 insurance and I got processed.
"What do you want to do. Dean?" asked the sergeant processing me.
"I don't want to walk".
"Okay, we'll send you down to the Corps of Combat Engineers at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.
I was given orders to proceed to Fort Belvoir in Virginia, outside of Washington. I did my basic training there. Among the soldiers in my training unit were young men who did not know how to read and write. My name being Dean, the soldier ahead of me was named Corvin. Corvin was illiterate. He was 18, was married, and had a child. He came from the Appalachian Mountains. So, I said: "Corvin, I'll make you a deal. You clean my rifle and I'll write your letters." We had a deal and we carried out this arrangement during the four months of training. Another fellow was named Baines. He was also illiterate. Because of that handicap, illiterate soldiers could not stand guard duty because they could not learn by heart the Orders of the Day. One of them put the flag upside down purposely so he did not have to stand guard duty again. They were clever and nice buddies. They knew how to shoot a lot better than I did. At one point, we built a pontoon bridge. Building bridges in combat areas over rivers was one of primary duties of the Combat Engineers. During this exercise, we used a "gin pole". A gin pole is a big, heavy pole used for maneuvering a large construction piece into place. It was a rainy day. Suddenly, I started sliding into the mud, always holding on to the gin pole. At one point, I was the only one holding the pole. Suddenly, I found myself under the pole and my leg caught under the heavy log. Next thing I knew, I woke up in the military hospital and spent two weeks there. They had to do a little surgery to repair broken veins. After 2 weeks, I returned to my training

unit and we finished training all together. By that time, the invasion (D-Day) had taken place (June 6, 1944) and every military unit had losses. By the time our unit had finished our basic training and our final maneuver in the hills of Virginia, U.S. forces had crossed France and were approaching the Vosges Mountains and fighting near Belgium. It was early November 1944. Winter was approaching and U.S. military units in Europe needed replacements for those who had been killed or wounded in battle. That was to be the fate of most of my buddies in my training course.

One day, after returning from maneuvers, we got orders to assemble on the parade ground of Fort Belvoir, Virginia. It was a cold autumn day. The commanding colonel said: "Men, you have finished your basic training. Now, it's your turn to do your duty and help your comrades in arms." We had full field packs on our backs, rifle slung over the left shoulder, and a duffle bag on the side. The administrative officer called out names. As the name was called, the soldier had to take one step forward. On that day, everybody's name was called except mine. Everybody - except me - stepped one step forward, made a left turn, and marched off the parade ground. I was standing all by myself on the parade field. The administrative officer shouted: "Dean, go and see the Captain." I didn't know what was wrong. I went to see the Captain and said: "All my buddies are gone." He said: "They are going to be replacements in Europe. They are not going as a unit, so don't complain. They are being sent as replacements for those who have been killed."

Q: To a report depot.

DEAN: That's right. "They are going, but you've got different orders. Here is a nickel." I said: "What am I going to do with a nickel?" He said: "A staff car is going to take you to Alexandria, Virginia. You go to the drug store on Queen Street and call this number." I said: "What kind of nonsense is this?" He said: "I understand you speak German and French, don't you?" I said: "Yes." He said: "You do what you are told." A staff car took me from Fort Belvoir to Alexandria. I made a phone call at a booth in the drug store, with the nickel which had been given to me. "This is Private Dean reporting." "Okay, Dean. you wait at the corner of Queen Street and we will pick you up." Another staff car picked me up half an hour later. For the next two years, I served at Post Office Box 1142, Alexandria, Virginia. I was sent to Europe at one point, but I always remained part of "Post Office Box 1142."

Q: Was this OSS?

DEAN: It was military intelligence. The OSS colleagues with whom I worked lived in a mansion on the road to Mount Vernon. I went to Fort Hunt, also a stop on the Mount Vernon Highway, about 5 minutes from our OSS friends. Today, at Fort Hunt, you can see nothing that existed during the war. I took my wife there, 30 years later. There is nothing there except some areas designated "Off Limits". During my military career, I could wear most anything I wanted - civilian clothes, military clothes (but I was a little young guy at 18 to pose as an officer). In 1944, I heard for the first time the word "atomzertrummerung" meaning splitting of the atom. Few people had ever heard about it until one year later.

Some of my colleagues were interesting people. One of them died quite Recently: Alexander Dallin. There was a long obituary in "The New York Times". He was a specialist on Russia. Alexander Dallin's father had been one of the revolutionaries in 1917. As the revolution devoured most of the others, he fled Russia via Berlin and Paris, and then came to the States. Alex Dallin's specialty was speaking Russian. We had others who spoke fluent Russian. They dealt with very senior officers in the Vlassov Army.

Q: This is the army... How did they get out? Weren't they still fighting on the German side?

DEAN: Yes, but some of these officers felt that the war was being lost by the Germans and they surrendered to American forces in France. The Vlassov Army were Russian forces who had deserted the Russian Army and had engaged themselves on the side of the Germans. The Russians considered them traitors, and the Germans used them as mercenaries. We, in the U.S., knew little about Russia. The high officers of the Vlassov Army knew a lot.

But let me now turn to one episode of my military career that taught me a lot. While at P.O. 1142, I had the great pleasure of meeting and working in a most humble capacity with a German citizen by the name of Gustav Hilger. Gustav Hilger was a Russian of German extraction. His family had been living in Russia for centuries. They were well educated merchants. In 1924, Gustav Hilger was appointed by the German democratic government of the Weimar Republic to be the representative of the German Red Cross in the Soviet Union. Hilger spoke three languages fluently: German, Russian, and French. He did not speak a word of

English. In 1932, as the Germans established diplomatic relations, Gustav Hilger became Minister Plenipotentiary of the German Embassy in Moscow. He was probably one of the most knowledgeable Germans about the Soviet Union. In 1939, Molotov and Ribbentrop signed the Armistice, the treaty dividing up Poland.

Q: The Ribbentrop Pact.

DEAN: Yes. In the famous photograph commemorating the occasion, our friend, Gustav Hilger, stood right in back of Ribbentrop. Hilger was married and had one son. The only son was killed in Stalingrad in January 1943. In 1944, Hilger constituted himself prisoner and he was brought to the United States. Gustav Hilger was the most knowledgeable man about a country we knew relatively little. He was a fine gentleman. People came from all over the U.S. Government to talk with him. Sometimes they needed interpreters. Sometimes I would just take him to a tea house and have a cup of tea with him – always in civilian clothes. He told me his life. I kept him company. We bought whatever he needed. He stayed on in the United States until the early 1950s. He was a major advisor to the United States. He held very balanced views. Hilger represented what I thought was good in the German people. He explained some of the horrors of the Stalin period. He also tried to explain why the Russians did certain things and how they did them, and the reaction of Russians and how Westerners interpreted them on the basis of their own cultural background. Very often, there was complete misunderstanding of each other's positions. Fear or suspicion on both sides - West and the Soviets - became to undercut the political alliance created by the common war against the Nazis.

I was able to practice my French and German with him. He was one of the first ones outside academia who explained to me the "game of nations" reality versus mythology. I learned that perhaps sometimes bad solutions are better than the alternative, which might be a tragedy. Hilger is long dead. When I talked to my German colleagues many years later about him, their eyes light up. He was an outstanding personality. He was not at all militaristic. He tried to understand and explain actions taken by the Soviets while in power. He also related how well the German army was initially received in the Ukraine, sometimes with arches of triumph made of flowers. Some of the German prisoners of war I dealt with carried photographs with them of their arrival in the Ukraine, which bears out Hilger's explanations.

Q: Bread and salt.

DEAN: Yes, some dignitaries came forward with bread and salt. Some Unkrainians saw in the German army liberation from the Soviet yoke. This was for me, as a young fellow, a tremendous awakening. Alfred Rosenberg who was the racist philosopher of Hitler, some weeks after the German invasion of Russia, tried to explain that the Slavs are "Untermensehen" ("sub-humans") and Russians should be treated as such that turned the Ukrainians and Belorussians, who were basically suffering from the Soviet system, into supporters of the Stalinist regime fighting the Germans. For me, at the time, the fact that at the very beginning of the German invasion in June 1941, the Germans had been received with open arms until this racist Rosenberg turned the Slavs into supporters of Stalin, was a revelation. (The Russians had 26 million people killed during World War II.)

I found that my relationship with Hilger was very educational. I learned about the drawbacks of the Soviet system as imposed by Stalin, as well as the heroism of the Russian people in defeating the German invaders. Hilger was an excellent historian who helped me to understand the various strands that make for the record of history.

Q: What was the purpose of Fort Hunt? Was this to understand the Soviet Union, or did it have other facets?

DEAN: The Soviet Union was only one aspect of the work at Fort Hunt. The main thrust was to interpret intelligence on the German war machine in order to help Allied Forces to win the war. But, even after the German defeat in May 1945, the work of Fort Hunt continued. Let me cite an example.

On May 5 or 6 1945, a German submarine surfaced off the coast of Uruguay. The captain of the ship was Captain Muller. By radio he asked the Americans to accept his surrender. In the submarine, which was on its way to Japan, was a German four-star Air Force general, a German navy commander by the name of Heinz Schlicke, and some others, including $30 million worth of mercury. Two Japanese officers had committed hara-kiri. The survivors were flown to Washington where I was told to take care of Schlicke. At the age of 19, I was in good shape and we did all kinds of sports together. Schlicke was a terrific sportsman. As I got to know him better, he confided that he had been a physicist and had been working at Pennemünde, the testing station where the V1 and V 2 had been developped during the war. Schlicke talked about his work at Pennemünde where he and his team had as task to invent a system which would permit military planes to see "through clouds, woods, in darkness, and through other visible obstacles" in order to detect the

presence of enemy troops or groups of resistance fighters. What Schlicke revealed was that his team had invented INFRARED technology, the location of humans by technology that picked up the heat generated by the human body. Hence, dense woods, darkness, etc. were no longer an obstacle for observation by the German military. His presence on the German submarine on its way to Japan was to convey to Germany's ally, Japan, the technology of Infra Red! At the time, the U.S. and its allies did not have that technology, although we were working on it.

Schlicke agreed to work in the U.S. to help us develop our own technology, provided we could bring his family to the U.S. It turned out that his wife with their 2 children were living in that part of Germany occupied at the end of the war by the Russians. Hence, reuniting Schlicke with his wife and children implied somebody bringing them out of the Russian zone, and then all four back to the U.S.

To make a long story short, I took a troop ship to France, from there got orders to enter the British zone, and finally ended up in Bavaria. In between, I had changed into civilian clothes, entered the Russian Zone, had met up with Mrs. Schlicke and the two children, and brought them to safety in Bavaria. There, Heinz Schlicke was waiting eagerly for his wife and children. Let me just add that the 24 hours in civilian clothes into the Russian Zone of occupation, engaged in an activity which was certainly not appreciated by our Russian ally, seemed long to me at the time.

But looking for scientists or researchers who had developed new technology and weapons for Germany was a quest shared by all victors of the war. I recall one of my colleagues brought the son of Professor Hertz to the

U.S. The father. Professor Hertz, whose name is associated with the Hertzian wave, was given by the Russians a laboratory in the Crimea, after the war. His son turned out to be much less inventive than his brilliant father. German missile developers, German scientists in physics and chemistry, many working in Pennemünde, were sought by by Americans, Russians. British and French. I don't think anybody cared at the time whether these people were part of the Nazi establishment or not.

While in Germany, shortly after the war, I also became aware of the suffering of the German people caused by the war they had started. The destruction of certain cities was visible. Housing was scarce, the normal population had been swollen by the millions of refugees that had fled into that part of Germany occupied by the U.S., Britain and France. Most of the men folk were still in prison camps. Food was scarce. The economy was destroyed. No work. It was a difficult period for the Germans, and I admit that there were times I felt sorry for them. Yes. we had won the war. The Germans had committed atrocities during the war. They had invaded many foreign countries. Civilians in other countries had suffered from the German occupation. In 1945 and thereafter it was the turn of the German civilians to learn what it means to be defeated in war. Nonetheless, I could feel some empathy for those who suffered – regardless of what side of the war they had been on.

Q: You were discharged when?

DEAN: August 1946.

Q: What did you do, go back to Harvard?

DEAN: Yes. I went back to Harvard.

Q: When you went back to Harvard, did you have a different goal? Did you know what you wanted to do?

DEAN: Yes, I wanted to finish college and get my Bachelor Degree. But I came back a different man than when I had entered Harvard in 1942. I had been at war. I had done my duty to my country. I had seen a lot of suffering during my years in the army. I also had learned that events looked differently depending on which point of view one held. Were my values still correct? To explore our ethics, I asked to audit a course in theology at Harvard. The course was given at the Harvard School of Divinity. The year was 1946-47. The professor's name was La Piana. La Piana was a former Nuncio -- a Pope's envoy. As I went for the last lecture in May 1947, I saw the President of Harvard, Conant, sitting in the front row. Most of the Faculty of Harvard was in attendance. Since the seats were taken by the distinguished visitors, the students had to stand in the back. La Piana spoke with an Italian accent; he was not easy to understand. His lecture centered on Albertus Magnus. As he was getting toward the end of his lecture, he looked around and said: "This is my last lecture before retirement. This is my goodbye. Well, gentlemen, perhaps my outlook on life can best be summed up in one phrase which goes back to the early days of Christianity: 'Ubi Libertas, Ibi Spiritu Dei' (where there is freedom, there is the spirit of God)". This event took place more than 50 years ago and still today brings tears to my eyes. The old Professor had given me guidance in the field of ethics.

Sure, I took all kinds of other courses - Economics, (Schumpeter, Harris,) German Literature, Geography, History, English Composition, French, etc... Since I had a good grade average, I was asked to sit for the honors examination. It was both a written and oral examination. On the written examination, there was a question on Walter von der Vogelweide, a German Mediaeval Poet. I am quite sure that I must have been the only candidate to write on that topic. Having taken a survey course in German literature, I could easily write several pages on that subject. I guess I was lucky.

After several days of written and oral exams, I emerged with a Magna cum Laude degree from Harvard. When I was informed of the good news, I called my father and said; "Dad, I made Magna cum Laude". He said: "I would not have expected anything else." I was pleased that I had lived up to his expectations.

My folks came for the graduation. It was the year that General Marshall gave his famous speech at Harvard on the reconstruction of Europe.

But there was a problem on the horizon. My best friend and I had met two very attractive young ladies. We planned to get married. We informed our parents of our intentions. My father was smart enough not to say "No". He said: "John, that is a wonderful idea. We are going to go to New Hampshire in the summer. Bring your girl-friend along. Promise me only one thing: For one year, you won't get married. As a matter of fact, I talked to your best friend's father, and we have decided that if you want to go and study in Europe in view of your European past, then when you come back, we will give you a wonderful wedding." We were very innocent and agreed to this deal. We went to New Hampshire and had a wonderful time. Then, we sailed for France. We had applied to Oxford University but the acceptance came after we had been accepted in France.

So, we sailed for France. On board ship, we met other beautiful girls. In France, we met many other attractive young ladies, and within six weeks, I wrote a letter to the young lady I considered my fiancée to the effect that "I'm too young to be married."

While in France, I got interested in art, science, music, subjects which I never had the time to study at Harvard. My primary focus was international law and relations. I spent two years in France obtaining a Doctor's Certificate in Law.

Q: Which Faculty did you attend?

DEAN: I went to the University of Paris Law School. I learned a lot about different kinds of international law.— International Public Law, International Private Law, International Law of the Sea, International Law of the Air, Conflict of National Law. etc.. In 1949, I got my diploma. Again, my father said: "Now, don't you want to go into banking? This is a serious profession. I'll call my friends in London and we will see what they come up with." My father's friend. Dr. Brüning, suggested Bering Brothers as a good place to get started. Since I was not eager to go into banking, it was suggested that I return to Harvard to study for a M.A. degree in international relations.

So, I went back to Harvard in 1949 to the Graduate School. In that program, I met some wonderful people, among them. Ambassador Shoesmith, and Ambassador Robert Miller, Brademus who later became President of the University of New York and, while in Congress, became the whip of the Democratic Party. We were all together learning about economics

and international affairs.

By the time I finished the Harvard Graduate School in 1950, I had received two job offers. 1950 was a wonderful time for a young man to come on the market. Jobs were abundant. Everybody who wanted to work could get a job. I got one offer from the CIA, and one job from Mr. Harriman, with the Economic Cooperation Agency in Paris. Mr. Harriman had in pre-war days been owner of a mine in Silesia where my father was on the Board of Directors. I was interviewed by Lincoln Gordon, who became later Assistant Secretary of State. He was a Harvard Professor and worked with Mr. Harriman. He said: "Why don't you come to Paris, to the headquarters of the European Marshall Plan? We'll put you in the Program Division. That is where economists are working on some very exciting ideas." My father urged me to accept the job offer in Paris. As for the offer to work in the CIA, my dad thought I was not cut out for it: "John, as a human being, you need applause. When you work for the CIA, you can't get applause. If something works, they will never admit it. If it fails, you might get the blame. It's a "marshy" atmosphere. Since the job in Paris has been offered, why don't you take it?" I took the assignment in Paris. It was one of the best learning experiences one can ever have.

Q: It was a very exciting time, too.

DEAN: It was a terribly exciting time. They needed people who had ideas. I worked with brilliant people: Tom Shelling of Harvard and his model building. He was one of the officers in that section. I was assigned as Program Officer for Greece and Turkey in the European Headquarters of the Marshall Plan. Jimmy Houghting, who became

Professor at Pennsylvania University, was in charge of Italy. John Lindeman was Director of the Division. Henry Tasca was in charge of Finance. He was one of the people starting the European Payments Union, which was the forerunner of the European Currency (EURO). The European Payments Union was a step toward the convertibility of the European currencies. Every country had a line of credit which it could draw on. These increments were known as "tranches". Settlement of debts was in dollars. This mechanism permitted multilateral trade. Greece and Turkey were heavy borrowers and I spent quite some time in visiting specific projects for which requests for funding had been made. I went several times to Greece and Turkey.

Q: What dates were you there?

DEAN: September 1950 through December 1951. John Craig, who is still very much alive, was my buddy. He is a very intelligent man and made his entire career in the Economic Aid business.

I learned much at the ECA European headquarters. Our office was located next to La Concorde in Paris, in what was known as the home of the great French diplomat Talleyrand. In 1950, Averell Harriman had been replaced by Abe Katz, as the chief in Paris. The people working in that office included some of the best academics and leading business people. Many of my colleagues and bosses were bright and brilliant. I learned something about economics, about business projects, finance, politics, central planning, and different cultures. The Marshall Plan was market oriented and promoted free enterprise. We in the U.S. benefited from obtaining new markets for our products, and Europeans profited from U.S. dollar credits to buy needed commodities and food to reconstruct their countries after 6 years of war.

It was probably one of the finest periods in American diplomacy.

Q: I have been Interviewing Arthur Hartman.

DEAN: He was working with Ambassador Bruce on the bilateral side of the Marshall Plan for France.

Q: Yes. Did you have the feeling you were all true believers? Jean Monnet was sort of the guy...

DEAN: I went over once to Jean Monnet. He spoke English and never needed an interpreter, a role I often was asked to play. I went to his house on Avenue Foch, as a notetaker.

The people who worked on the Marshall Plan, whether it was Arthur Hartman on the French side of the Marshall Plan, or in the European Headquarters side which I was on, were mostly believers in the need to build up Europe and maintain a close link between the two sides of the Atlantic. We all thought we were doing something useful and important. We were building a new world. There was no doubt that part of our job was to help Europe maintain some form of capitalism, a free enterprise system, and above all, democratic rule. One has to remember the spirit of the times. In the post-war period, the governments in France had included communists. There were also communists in other countries' governments. Governments in Europe were debating whether they were going to follow an authoritarian form of ruling with significant central government interference, or maintain a more democratic way of building up Europe. By 1950, Europe was already divided by the Iron Curtain. You remember what happened to Masarik in Czechoslovakia?

Q: A coup which really turned the..

DEAN: It was a big change. The Czechs at one point had said "Yes" to the Marshall Plan. The Marshall Plan provided the essential foreign exchange for these countries to feed themselves and to get their industries started again. Was it altruistic on our part? It was good common sense. We, at this point, helped to make Western Europe choose a path which is similar to ours.

As far as Greece and Turkey were concerned, the Marshall Plan also brought about some painful changes. Why? Because they were the largest exporters of tobacco to Central Europe. In many part of Europe, people smoked Greek and Turkish tobacco. During the Second World War GIs handed out American cigarettes - Maryland and Virginia blends. People got accustomed to smoking American-type tobacco. They preferred it and bought American cigarettes. But the Marshall Plan helped Greece and Turkey to rebuild their economies. We suggested new ways for the Greeks and the Turks to earn foreign exchange by exporting or by substituting domestic production for foreign imports. For example, we helped the Greeks to export and sell their grapes on foreign markets. In Turkey, we built a steel mill in Zanguldak, replacing some of the imports they could make cheaper themselves. In certain parts of Europe, without U.S.-provided foreign exchange and the Marshall Plan, people still did not have enough to eat. The U.S. provided badly needed wheat and corn to feed Western Europeans who did not grow enough grain immediately after the war. The Marshall Plan also provided modern technology. The concept of productivity was pushed by the Marshall Plan and it took hold all over the world. All of us who were involved in ECA felt we were doing something useful and it made our lives worthwhile.

Q: Oh yes. I mean, what are you here for?

DEAN: You have to give a purpose to your existence. When I accepted the job in Paris, I had not yet passed the Foreign Service Examination. I was not part of the U.S. Foreign Service. It was more of a contractual arrangement. Yes, Paris was not only a wonderful professional assignment, but I also met my wife there. To be precise, I met her on the ninth of February 1951 and it was one of the luckiest moments in my life. We have now been married 50 years.

Q: What was she doing?

DEAN: She was working pro bona at the French Foreign Office, what is called the "Quai d'Orsay". At the time, I had an old aunt who died in the States and she had left me $5,000 in her will. With that money, I bought a car and it gave me a nest egg.

Q: You could get a pretty good car for $1,000.

DEAN: It was a brand new Ford. In those days, I could park near my office. One day, I found on the windshield, a paper with "Yankee, go home". I said: "These French are a bunch of unfriendly people who are ungrateful for what we are doing." Soon thereafter, I was invited to the home of the president of what is the equivalent in France of our Supreme Court. They gave a party and I was invited. The friend who got me the invitation had been a school mate of mine in Paris. At that party I met my wife. That was the luckiest moment of my entire life. But I was suddenly transferred to Brussels, Belgium and I was not going to see my future wife for a while. The job was with the Marshall Plan to Belgium and I was assigned as industrial analyst. It was also the

first time that I came across corruption in government. My immediate boss accepted a bribe in order to give a contract to a certain Belgian company. A colonel in the Army Judge Advocate Corps came to Brussels to investigate. I was queried. What was my relationship with my boss? I replied: "Why are you here?". The Colonel claimed that my boss had deposited $15,000 in an American bank which was equivalent to what the Belgian company had paid him for getting the contract. It had never occurred to me that somebody who served his country could accept a bribe. One of the redeeming features of the Brussels assignment was on occasion to see one of America's great ambassadors at work: Robert Murphy.

Q: He was a major figure, particularly in World War II.

DEAN: In 1951-52, he was the U.S. Ambassador to Brussels. He was truly a role model for an aspiring young Foreign Service Officer.

Q: I want to capture one thing. You were talking about currency and economics. Did you have the feeling that behind whoever was coming out ahead industrially, the basic thing that you were trying to do was to integrate a Europe so that basically the Germans and French would not go at each other again?

DEAN: I think this was part of it. I also believe that the immediate post-war period threw up these great leaders in Europe who realized that Europe has to work together if Europe is to play a role again on the world scene. Roosevelt had never got along too well with De Gaulle, but De Gaulle knew how to lead his nation. He understood that France could never be a major player without the full cooperation of Germany. De Gaulle started his rapprochement with Germany for strictly national reasons. On the German side, Adenauer fully understood that Germany, after World War II, needed to work closely with the rest of democratic Europeans to become "acceptable" and this meant in the first place an alliance with France.

In Italy, the U.S. helped the Christian Democrats to pursue a pro-European policy, and the Treaty of Rome is the corner stone of today's European Union.

Q: Particularly in the elections of 1948.

DEAN: Yes, there was discreet advice given to the Italians to join the fledgling European Community. This brings me to an important point. In the immediate post-war period, U.S. foreign policy seemed to me primarily oriented toward mutual benefits. We were interested in helping Europe to get back on its feet because only one country had won the war: the United States. While the British were among the victors, Britain was basically exhausted. The Russians had won the war but their country was partially destroyed and they had had 26 million casualties. So, the only ones who emerged as the great victor from the war was the United States. By pursuing a policy of mutual interest toward Europe, our policies became highly acceptable to the Europeans. Americans were perceived as friends, in some countries as liberators. The Germans found out that while we had fought the war under the slogan of "unconditional surrender", once the war was over, we behaved with a great deal of understanding for Germany's problems. We held out our hand in friendship to the Germans. We provided funds under the Marshall Plan to build up and reconstruct Germany. But the U.S. also benefited from the reconstruction of Europe. American firms established branches in Europe and we invested in new industries in Europe. We helped to feed Europe and at the same time increased our market share for U.S. agricultural exports. It was a great period for U.S.-European cooperation in the mutual interest of both parties.

Q: Could you talk a little bit about how -- we are talking about 1950-1952 -- the Soviet Union was perceived? At that time, the coup in Czechoslovakia had happened. We were fighting the Korean War, which we felt had been inspired by Stalin and all. How did we feel about the Soviet Union?

DEAN: Let me be very frank. I am not a Soviet expert. My knowledge of the Soviet Union comes from my very interesting two years in military intelligence.

Q: We are talking about this particular period.

DEAN: The impression I get -- and I did not voice it a great deal at the time but I felt it then and still feel it's true today -- is that there was a certain amount of fear and distrust of each other. That fear was magnified when in the immediate post-war period, some European governments had to include communists in their government. In the Resistance movement of some nations, the communists had been in the lead fighting the Germans. In France, De Gaulle asked Maurice Thorez to come back from Moscow and he put him in the French Government. In the areas under Russian occupation or control, the Russians shipped back to their country whatever they needed and was still standing. They helped themselves without any real pangs of conscience. As a result, while the governments in the areas under Russian influence may have been imposed by the Russians, they did not make that many friends in the local population. The distrust of the West of the Communist world and vice-versa may have undermined certain wartime agreements. Distrust and fear existed on both sides of the Iron Curtain. The Europeans had a different problem. Part of the population was communist. Sometimes, as much as a third of the population was. For example, in order to avoid civil conflict, De Gaulle had no option but

to put communists in the government and later on remove them. The best example of a European statesman who managed to "balance" the West and the communists was Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia. He did not want to be under Soviet control, so he worked with the West and ended up as one of the leaders of the Non-Aligned world. In the European Headquarters of the Marshall Plan we quickly started a Yugoslav section which helped Tito to remain independent while still following a number of Marxist policies. But they were national Marxist policies!

Q: This was again 1948-1949.

DEAN: Yes. Not everybody perceived in that particular period of time -- and I'm talking about the period of 1946-1951-- that there was national Marxism, and then there was communism with nations subservient to another power, i.e. the Soviet Union.

I want to open a parenthesis, because my name is very much attached to Southeast Asia. In the summer of 1947, Ho Chi Minh came to Fontainebleau, France. He wanted to be part of the French Union, which was comparable to the British Commonwealth. That process would eventually lead to independence. There were some key people in France who favored that process for Vietnam. It must be recalled that the United States had worked with Ho Chi Minh during the Second World War. Major Patty of the OSS helped the Vietnamese to fight the Japanese military. The French were politically too weak in 1947 to grant Vietnam membership in the French Union which would lead to independence. Instead of fighting, Ho Chi Minh wanted support to create an independent state with some linkage to France. He also represented national Marxism. Maybe some of the great scholars in our country will contradict me, but

we in the U.S. have a tendency to equate communism usually with subservience to the Soviet Union. Many communists were also ardent nationalists. The Chinese are a good example.

Q: We certainly were talking that game. It was part of the rhetoric of the time.

DEAN: In the post-war period in Europe, Tito was the exception of a communist leader taking his distance from Moscow. We helped him financially and economically in his effort. He really built up a relatively sound state. Yugoslavia had a central government and the different ethnic groupings had their autonomous units with their own political assemblies. I think there were autonomous states and two or three "Territories". Tito had decentralized a great deal, but his strong, forceful personality kept the country together. Some of the leaders in today's Europe are former communists, but they are national communists and they adapted to the new world. As a matter of fact, the former Prime Minister of Italy was in this category. In those days, we did not differentiate much between national communism and countries subservient to Moscow and under Soviet control. From the Soviet point of view, the U.S. and the West was anti-Moscow, and mutual distrust led to what became known later as the Cold War, Moscow interpreted most U.S. initiatives as being against the Soviets, regardless of what was the motivation of the U.S. or the West.

Q: They were being surrounded.

DEAN: That is the way the Soviets saw it in the period of Stalin. We were trying to contain the expansion of communism and not have this disease spread any further. That was our doctrine at the time,

Q: Let's go back. When you were with the Marshall Plan, you were dealing with Greece and Turkey. Did you feel that, as a Junior Officer, you were left with the katzenjammer kids, the real problems? These other countries had real economies. Greece and Turkey hated each other. They had lousy economies. They were backward and many felt they really were not part of this European business anyway.

DEAN: I don't really agree. Greece is, after all, the craddle of Western civilization. Turkey was the heir of the great Ottoman Empire which had many links with Europe. But the leadership was highly educated and eloquent. George Papandreou, the old George, spoke fluent French and German. Venezelos, another great Greek statesman, was in the same situation. In Turkey, it was the same foreign language situation. All the technical people, for example the engineers, were trained in Germany. Most of the lawyers, diplomats, and doctors were educated in France. Just because the elite of these countries did not speak English, did not mean that they were uneducated. They just had been exposed to European influence. Today, in both Greece and Turkey, most people speak English. This is the result of America's paramount role in the world.

The two countries were very different from each other. At the time, in Greece, raged a civil war. First, the British helped the Greek government. When the British threw in the towel, we picked up the support for the Greek government. On Greece, you would be well advised to listen to Ambassador Robert Keeley who was one of our most distinguished ambassadors to Greece. Personally, I know little about the politics of Greece and Turkey. My job was to improve their economy, their balance of payments, and raise their standard of living. This implied obtaining funds for specific projects and see them to fruition. We had a huge ECA mission in Greece. Don't forget I was in the European Headquarters where I had to defend Greek and Turkish projects and explore how to finance them.

Other colleagues had the same job for Italy, France, Belgium, etc. One of the finest people in our Mission in Athens at the time was Mike Adler, one of the great Americans serving in Greece.

As for Turkey, we must remember that Turkey had been very much part of Europe until 1914. After all, the Ottoman Empire got to the gates of Vienna. Whether people like it or not, Turkey has a great interest in Europe and Turkey was very much part of the European Recovery Program in which the ECA was directly involved.

Q: You were in the Program Office. What were you doing? Were you basically trying to figure out ways to get more money out of the system to go to "your" country, as opposed to one of the other countries?

DEAN: We tried to explain to much higher ranking people, both Americans and Europeans, what projects in the countries for which we had responsibility made sense. For example, in Turkey, the Turks imported steel though they had both coal and iron in ample supply. ECA helped to find them financing to build a modern steel mill at Zanguldak. That was one of the projects I worked on. In Greece, I searched for markets for their grapes and how to package them and transport then to new markets. When I worked with representatives of the European Payments Union in Paris, I would submit papers to justify the granting of credit, if needed, for the balance of payments of specific projects. My colleagues did the same for the countries they represented in the Program Office. The Program Office was a kind of planning staff. Decisions were made on a much higher level.

Q: When other people were saying "Belgium needs this" or "France needs this", did you say "You've got to think about Turkey and Greece"?

DEAN: No, not really. We were just one section in this European Headquarters of ECA. There were many other sections: a financial section, a political adviser's office, etc. We were something like the geographic bureau in the State Department. Obviously, we hoped that our program would also contribute to building democracy. Greeks and Turks have different ways of negotiating. When a Turk says: "Yes", it's yes. When it's "No", it's no. In reply to a leading question, Greeks have a tendency to waffle. But it's easier to strike a deal with the Greeks. They are more flexible and are quite compromise-oriented. Our role basically was to help these countries to move economically forward so that politically, they would shun the extremes. We were more sensitive to potential threats from the extreme left and perhaps, at times, more permissive on the dangers of the extreme right, i.e. the Colonels in Greece.

Q: In Belgium, you were there from 1951 to 1952.

DEAN: Yes, I volunteered there. At that point, my relations with my wife got to the point where I was saying: "Are you going to marry this girl or are you not going to marry this girl?" I went to see the Chief of the ECA Mission, Mr. Gilchrist, and I said: "I would like to marry Miss Martine Duphenieux .Here is my resignation, which I understand will be held until the Security people give their agreement. If the Security agents do not give her clearance, my resignation can be accepted". Well, I was willing to resign in order to marry my future wife. A few weeks later, I was told that the resignation was not accepted; I could get married. Little did I know that my wife came? from a prominent family.

As a matter of fact, the NATO headquarters today, in Belgium, is on her land. In 1965 or 1966, De Gaulle asked NATO to leave Paris. The Belgians offered a site near Mons. During the Second World War, there stood a huge castle which belonged to my wife's family. The Germans requisitioned it as the Western Headquarters for the German Luftwaffe. They built an air strip on it. It remained the Headquarters of the Luftwaffe until January 1945 when the British bombed the chateau. Today, there is very little left. When De Gaulle asked NATO to leave, the Belgians offered that piece of land with the destroyed chateau on it, but it had an excellent air strip. When Alexander Haig was Commander-in-Chief of NATO, he was always invited to do a big hunt on the grounds.

In 1952, we were married in Paris. I immediately offered to leave Brussels. I had heard there was a war in Indochina. I offered to go to Indochina for the Marshall Plan. Since I spoke and wrote French, and that language proficiency was essential in those days in French-speaking posts, American French-speaking officers were needed, and I volunteered to go to Indochina. We were accredited to Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Our main residence was in Saigon. We arrived in Saigon in March of 1953.

Q: You were in what was Indochina from 1953 until when?

DEAN: From March 1953 until January of 1956. I was with the Economic Mission to Indochina (i.e. 3 countries). During that time, I decided to take the Foreign Service Examination and become a regular member of the Service. By that time, I got to be fairly well-known among U.S. Government employees in Indochina. Some of the American ambassadors I had worked for wrote back to the State Department recommending me

for acceptance if I passed the exam. I went back to Washington, took the written Foreign Service Examination, and passed it.

Q: You got a score of 72, and 70 was passing. George Kennan, by the way, got something like 71. I was on the Board of Examiners and looked him up.

DEAN: I barely passed and got in.

Q: You went to Saigon in March of 1953, What was the situation when you arrived?

DEAN: There was a huge French military Expeditionary Corps. The American Embassy and Economic Mission was small. It was to a large extent a French show of fighting the Viet Minh. The fighting basically took place in North Vietnam.

Q: Around the Red River and that area.

DEAN: The first job was to work with the Financial Adviser of the French High Commission. Few people realize today that the French Expeditionary Corps, the Vietnamese Armed Forces, the Cambodian Armed Forces, as well as the French advisers to these Indochinese forces, were all financed by the United States. That year, 1953-1954. the United States spent $875 million in support of the French and Indochinese armies to fight the communists. My job was to document how the money was spent, I had a counterpart who I have met again many years later, Pierre Hunt, who became a well-known French Ambassador to Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt. He was on the side of the French. The French military would give us details on how they spent the money, for example for pay, for ammunition, for training of Vietnamese or Cambodian pilots, etc... In Cambodia, there was not much fighting. My official title was "Economic Commissioner".

We also worked on development projects in the 3 Indochinese states. I was at hand when the French Commanding General of the Expeditionary Corps, General Navarre, came to see Ambassador Donald Heath to ask for American air strikes to silence the North Vietnamese artillery which was installed on the hills overlooking the French camp of Dien-Bien-Phu.

Q: He was my ambassador in Saudi Arabia.

DEAN: I remember one occasion when the French Forces were surrounded in Dien Bien Phu. He had a party for the French High Commissioner. Ambassador Heath climbed on the table and toasted the French "heroes" defending the Free World. As I said before, one day, I was asked to go to the Embassy. The Commanding General of the French Forces, General Navarre, was going to come to see the American Ambassador, and in case of need for an interpreter, I was there. Fortunately, the embassy had other competent interpreters and the First Secretary was asked to attend the meeting. It was at that meeting that General Navarre requested U.S. air support for the encircled French Forces at Dien Bien Phu. The request to bomb the hills overlooking Dien Bien Phu was turned down in Washington a few days later. It should be added that during the campaign at Dien Bien Phu, American pilots flying Air America, risked their lives to deliver precious ammunitions and supplies to the beleaguered French troops. So, the U.S. was helping France in this war.

At one point, since the ambassador was accredited to all three countries, I was asked by the American authorities to go to Phnom Penh with my wife for two months. The Chargé had left on home leave. Having no

children yet, we were available to spend 2 months at a neighboring posting. It was on that occasion that I first met Sihanouk.

Q: He is still around.

DEAN: He is still around. Sihanouk played a major role in my efforts, 20 years later, to find a negotiated solution in Cambodia – something I achieved in Laos. My role in Cambodia in October 1953 consisted largely of looking after the few economic aid projects we had in Cambodia. But I got an insight into Cambodia and how Sihanouk functions, which later on was going to be helpful. When I see Sihanouk today, nearly 50 years later, he still remembers some of the events that occurred at that time.

Q: What was your impression of Sihanouk at the time?

DEAN: He was extremely Frenchified but he was truly the "father" of his people. That role he took seriously. When Sihanouk mounted on the throne in 1941 or 1942. he was a young man of 18 or 19 years of age. He was not the logical choice to become king. On his mother's side. Sihanouk was a Sissowat, the other royal family. On his father's side. he was a Norodom. The Sissowats were more nationalistic and more independence-oriented. But the Cambodians, whose territory had been reduced both by the Thais and the Vietnamese, had to worry about two tigers, one on the East, and one on the West, who had designs on the remaining Cambodian Empire. So, the Cambodians turned to the French who were far away but had no territorial designs on the country. Cambodia was under French tutelage but also protection against encroachment by Cambodia's neighbors. Between all the evils they

faced, French influence was the lesser of the evils. Sihanouk Norodom was a young man well prepared by French military and civilian advisers to assume his duties. While he, the Prince of Cambodia, had never read Machiavelli, he received a good education in what it means to govern. There was no doubt that over time Sihanouk became truly the father figure of his country. The average Cambodian saw in him the incarnation of the nation. In America, we have had a difficult time understanding Sihanouk. During my long career, I stood up for Sihanouk many times. We will get to this. I always thought Sihanouk's primary interest was to defend Cambodia's national interest. I recall that in 1954 Sihanouk left his capital Phnom Penh, went to Bangkok, and said to the French: "I will not return unless I get full independence." He insisted on it and he got it. When students study the Geneva Conference of 1954, it was Sihanouk who absolutely refused any mention in a treaty which alluded to organized opposition within his country (i.e. Khmer Rouges). Both Vietnam and Laos had to sign a document which discussed the Viet Minh and the Pathet Lao. In 1953-54, we knew relatively little about Cambodia. We considered Cambodia to be part of the zone of French influence. Cambodia had a small, well educated upper class. It was small, but the French had helped Cambodia to have their own military. their own doctors, their own atomic scientists, their own lawyers, etc. In 1975, I took a Cambodian atomic scientist with me out of Cambodia. (He ended up in France). If needed, Sihanouk would also stand up against the French, In 1970, when he was deposed by a coup d'état of Long Nol and Sirik Matak, Sihanouk spent a couple of days in the Soviet Union, but from there he went on to Beijing to await the end of the conflict. Sihanouk had a sense of history. He knew that for centuries China had been the protector of Cambodia.

Cambodia is first mentioned in the diplomatic annals by a Chinese emissary who visited Angkor Wat in about the 10th century. Cambodia was a vassal of the Chinese Emperor. Sihanouk knew that if he wanted to return to Phnom Penh, he had to work with the Chinese. He did return to Cambodia after the Khmer Rouges had occupied Phnom Penh in 1975. Sihanouk always understood power, but we made little effort to see the area through his eyes.

Q: I'm talking about the time you were there. Were we seeing him as a powerful figure, or were we seeing him as a figure of fun?

DEAN: Our ambassador at the time, who was one of my bosses, McClintock, always called him the "Little King". He made fun of Sihanouk and Sihanouk knew it. This was poor psychology. Sihanouk also had an ego and he did not appreciate any gesture or remark which did not give him his due as Chief of State of an ancient kingdom.

Q: That was Robert McClintock.

DEAN: Yes. He was the first American ambassador to Cambodia. He was a very able man, but he saw Cambodia as an operetta state. Sihanouk, at one point, was King, then he put his mother on the throne, but he always remained the real power behind it. He established the "Royal Socialist Boy Scouts". He saw no contradiction in terms. He was surrounded by French advisers. Sihanouk did not listen to the U.S. a great deal. Even back in 1953-54, Sihanouk was basically a neutral and a neutral at the time of Secretary of State Foster Dulles, was not the best way to endear oneself to the U.S.

Q: I can't remember the exact wording, but it was basically, if you are neutral, you are a communist or you are the enemy.

DEAN: Basically, Secretary Dulles preferred to see the small states being either in one camp or another, i.e. communist or free world. The advisers to Sihanouk realized that Thailand and Vietnam were the real long-term threat to Cambodia's territorial integrity. They favored a middle road, a neutralist policy, as the best way for Cambodia's survival. Sihanouk was one of the founding fathers of the Bandung Non-Aligned Nations Conference in Indonesia, and he may be the last surviving one. That policy was anathema to American diplomacy at the time. I was, at the time, at the dawn of my Foreign Service career. I honestly felt that it was okay for small states to be neutral. I was not convinced that every nation had to choose sides. I remembered that Belgium had been neutral in World War I. Belgium was invaded and Herbert Hoover made his name by helping the starving Belgians during the German occupation to survive. The Belgians, still today, so many years later, are grateful to Herbert Hoover. For many years, neutrality had been a respected principle. The Swiss had neutrality in 2 wars in the 20th century. After the Second World War, Austria was given neutral status. Sweden was neutral during World War II and they were helpful to all sides. Portugal was neutral in the Second World War. The U.S. had remained neutral from September 1939 to December 1941; I felt at the time that Cambodia was a rich country, agriculturally. It had a unifying cement: Sihanouk. People did not go hungry. It was not a democratic republic but a Monarchy where King and deity were somewhat linked. But the people of Cambodia also remembered that nearly 100 years earlier, the Vietnamese had put a puppet as Viceroy in Phnom Penh to rule on behalf of Vietnam. During the Second World War, the Thais had annexed all the rich provinces west of the Mekong. Who remembers that the price for Thailand's entering into the United Nations was to give back to Cambodia and to Laos the areas annexed during the Second World War?

Neutrality made sense to me at the time because some of the small countries did not want to be dragged into the Communist-Free World conflict. And Vietnam was already looming on the horizon as a conflict between two ideologies and a war of independence as seen through Vietnamese eyes. After all, Cambodia had independence and did not need to fight for it. We are In 1953;

Q: You were there when McClintock replaced Heath?

DEAN: No. McClintock became Ambassador to Cambodia in 1956 or so. At that time, we sent separate ambassadors to Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. When I went in October 1953 with my wife to Phnom Penh, we had one Ambassador, Donald Heath, who was accredited to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. We had Chargés in Cambodia and in Laos. I went there in order to replace a Chargé who was on home leave. It lasted two months. There was one prominent American who supported Sihanouk at that time: Mike Mansfield, Senator from Montana. Senator Mansfield remained a friend of Sihanouk until the very end.

Let me switch the subject from politics to art. In 1953, my wife and I drove for the first time to Angkor Wat. Both of us were deeply impressed by the great ruins and temples swallowed up by the tropical forest. The "Smile of Angkor" had done its magic. We got interested in another civilization, an art form alien to our Western culture. My wife and I spent a wonderful week ambling through these ruins at a time when there were hardly any tourists. We were alone with the temples and the trees.

Q: During this time with AID, particularly in Saigon, were you getting a feeling that the French were on a losing streak... What was the atmosphere?

DEAN: The atmosphere was basically that, unfortunately. The French made the same mistake we continued to make after their departure. The Vietnamese are an able people, regardless whether they are from the North or from the South. When we were there in the early 1950s, I thought that the French should be more willing to give the Vietnamese control over their own affairs. I honestly felt at the time that President Roosevelt had been right because he understood that open colonialism had come to an end. Unfortunately, we also made the same mistake some years later. A people struggling for their independence will take their support from wherever they can obtain it. The West was clinging for too long to obsolete concepts. The Vietnamese turned to the Russians and Chinese and used communist support to gain their independence.

Q: Roosevelt was quite emphatic about this.

DEAN: Yes, I think Roosevelt was right. I would like to say, there were people on the French side who agreed with this reasoning and they were not communists. Mendes-France, Prime Minister at the time of the Geneva Accords, was certainly one of the more enlightened French leaders. He afterwards played an absolute cardinal role in giving independence to Tunisia and to Morocco. He was involved in that process of turning over sovereignty to the newly independent countries without losing the relationship with the former colonial power. Not everybody was able to do that, turning over sovereignty to the indigenous governments and still maintaining a close link with the former colonial country. Perhaps French leaders don't see everything in black and white but more grey.

Let me switch to Laos. We are in 1953. I am sent to Laos. Mike Reaves. a FSO-6 -- the lowest rank in the Service, was Chargé. As for me. I was not in the Foreign Service yet. There was also a lady with him in charge

of economic assistance. Prince Souvanna Phouma was Minister of Public Works in the Royal Lao Government. He was a French-trained engineer. He was a graduate of one of the best specialized schools in France. Prince Souvanna Phouma was part of the Viceroy's family of Laos. In those days, the children of this elite often were educated in the good private schools of France, for example, "L'Ecole de Normandie". In the summertime, during the vacation period, it was too difficult for the youngsters to return to Laos. A round-trip by boat took 6 weeks. My wife's family had some cousins who attended the same school. At least two of the children of Prince Souvanna Phouma had gone to school with my wife's cousins. During the summer vacation in France, not being able to return to Laos, they were asked to spend some weeks at the country home of my wife's family. Furthermore, the King of Laos had attended the same school in France as my father-in-law. Hence, when I went up to Laos in 1954 or 1955, I was invited by these two gentlemen to the homes of key Lao officials. These contacts were to play an important role in my later assignments to Laos. When Martine and I went for the first time to Laos, we saw about 10 or 12 automobiles in Vientiane. Working toilettes were rare. When Secretary Dulles visited Vientiane, he was lodged at the King's guest house which did not have a solid water closet. Mr. Duties had an unfortunate incident which did not help to dispose him more favorably to the neutralist government of Laos. In the 1950s, Laos was still living in a different world, many years apart from the modern world.

In 1954, I returned to Washington to take the Foreign Service Examination. I first passed the written examination and then was scheduled to take the oral examination. When I entered the Foreign Service, there were very few foreign-born Americans in the career Foreign Service. While I had reached a relatively high rank in the Economic Aid Program, I was

determined not to be integrated laterally. I did not want to be criticized later that I had entered the Foreign Service by the rear door. So, I took the written and oral examinations and started my career from the lowest rank upward.

Q: Do you recall your oral exam?

DEAN: Yes, I do. Ambassador Green, former Ambassador to Ethiopia, was a distinguished Foreign Service Officer. He presided. I had a Foreign Service officer from USIA, one from AID, and a consular officer by the name of Rose. Actually, he had given me my visa in Berlin in 1938 to go to the United States. He was also on the Board of Examiners. They did not give me an easy time. They wanted to test me whether I could represent honorably and knowledgeably the United States. Here are some of the questions they asked me: "Mr. Dean, what makes you think you are able to represent the United States? You were born in Germany. How do you think you can represent the United States?" I said I had come to the States at age 12. I had attended the American public school system. I had served in the American Army during war time. I had known the rich and the poor. I had lived in the Middle West. Above all, I thought I had acquired the values which made the United States great. Like all immigrants, I had made George Washington a role model and I wanted to serve the country which had given me a new home. When asked to talk about Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson in my oral examination, I remember that I was well equipped to address these questions.

Q: Thanks to the librarian in Kansas City.

DEAN: Later on, mind you, I had a good political science course at Harvard. Education in the public high school system of Missouri, plus

Harvard University helped me to explain differences between both men but both views were needed to make the United States. After that question, I was asked what kind of cattle is raised in Texas. Answer: Longhorn. What was the economy of Oregon? Did Oregon have different economies in the east and in the west? I was able to address these questions quite well and passed the oral examination. Having passed the Foreign Service Examination, upon my return to Saigon, the Economic Counselor of the Embassy, Mr. Gardner Palmer, took me into the Economic Section.

Q: You went back to Saigon.

DEAN: Yes, I went back after taking the examination. There was no money to get an appointment In the Foreign Service right away, but I had passed the written, the oral, the physical and security examinations, and once back in Saigon I was treated somewhat differently. I was awaiting appointment as a Foreign Service Officer and had become a "colleague". It was In those days that I met Patricia Byrne, later one of our able ambassadors and friends.

In the Economic Section in Saigon, in 1955, I was given the job of helping in the negotiation of the sale of assets of the Bank of Indochina to the Bank of Vietnam and to the Bank of Cambodia. For the sale, the French sent from Paris one of the top executives of the Bank of Indochina. He was rather well known because he had been a major player during the Vichy period in France. Some considered him a war criminal. As Prefet in France, he had been responsible for rounding up Jewish children who were sent to concentration camps. He was the person with whom I negotiated.

Q: What was his name?

DEAN: His name was Rene Bousquet. He was assassinated around 1990 in France, René Bousquet's name appears on the negotiating contracts. The Bank of Indochina sold its buildings, its facilities, and they wanted to be paid in convertible currency. The year was January 1956. Since the U.S. Government needed local currency, piastres, I was asked to convert the piastres paid by the Vietnamese Government into U.S. dollars, which is what the French wanted. At the time, Ngo Dinh Diem was Pre - sident of South Vietnam. The U.S. Government agreed to exchanging dollars for piastres. The Vietnamese put up the piastres. We put up the foreign exchange. The French took it home, and the Bank of Vietnam was created. I then flew to the United States to get new bank notes printed - no longer in France - but in the United States. The plates were in the United States. That was an important consideration. As will be noted, this transaction also reflected the change of influence in Vietnam, from France toward the United States.

Q: Was this a point of conflict?

DEAN: There is usually suspicion and some bad feelings when one foreign country is being replaced by another foreign power. At the time, Ngo Dinh Diem, who was a highly educated, French-speaking, nationalist mandarin, came to power. Perhaps there were elements in the French military and political establishment who felt that the U.S. did not give them the support they wanted or needed. But it was at that time that we began to replace the French in Vietnam as the guardians of the ramparts fighting communism. This was not the case in Cambodia.

Cambodia was a relatively peaceful place in those years, Laos had not yet become a site of confrontation. In January of 1956, I left Indochina, having helped the Vietnam National Bank to be established. In Cambodia, the National Bank of Cambodia was established. In Laos, it was slightly slower. The Bank of Indochina stayed up there for a couple of years longer and the Lao Government took over financial control in a very peaceful manner. Most French realized that the era of French colonialism had come to an end in Asia. The more enlightened political leaders, for example, Mendes France and General de Gaulle were decolonizers. They realized that the time of overt political colonialism had come to an end. The overpowering influence of the former colonial power behind the scenes also had come to an end and different ways had to be found of working with these emerging nations. Was there bad feeling? Probably some, but not for very long. Colonialism had brought good and bad features. At first, the countries of Indochina saw us as supporters of their independence. As time went on, in all three countries, the authorities realized that the United States also had its priorities and they did not always coincide with the goals of the indigenous governments. For example, in Vietnam, Ngo Dinh Diem was killed; Sihanouk was forced out by Long Nol; and in Laos, the Pathet Lao replaced the King. It was too bad that the West did not accept earlier that colonialism had come to an end in 1945 with the conclusion of World War II.

In January 1956 we returned to Washington and that spring I formally entered the U.S. Foreign Service. I entered at the bottom of the scale as a FSO-6. At the time, that was the lowest level. Shortly thereafter, the ladder was extended by 2 grades to FSO-8.

Q: You came in 1956 as a 06, then fell back to 08, and got promoted rather quickly to FSO-7.

DEAN: That's right. That is exactly what happened to me. I fell back to an 8 and was quickly promoted to a 7 at my first FS posting. Before leaving Washington, I attended the FSO basic course where I made a lot of good friends.

Q: You started your FSO basic course when - in 1956?

DEAN: Yes, in 1956. Then, Jefferson Graham Parsons said "I need a very junior officer in the Political Section in Vientiane. I have been made Ambassador to Laos. I want you to go with me out there." I had an offer. Obviously, what had helped me up to this time was the fact that I had studied in France, spoke fluent French, and wrote French without difficulty (and if needed, I could always take the paper back to my wife who would correct it). 1956 was the period when we replaced the French in supporting the Meo tribesmen in their struggle against the communists. The French had used the hill tribes as mercenaries in their fight against the Viet Minh in North Vietnam. As you know, Dien Bien Phu is located in that area between Laos and North Vietnam where the hill tribes hold sway. The CIA was going to replace the French by hiring not the Thai Dam tribe as the French had, but by using similar people, the Meo people who were basically not Lao or Thai, but Chinese. They had drifted southward from China.

My big boss was Ambassador Jefferson Graham Parsons. He had a very able wife, Peggy. Ambassador Parsons believed in Foster Dulles' policies that all countries had to choose sides. Neutrality was frowned upon.

Q: You were in Laos from 1956 to 1958.

DEAN: Yes, I served two Ambassadors. Jefferson Graham Parsons who went back in 1957 to Washington to be Assistant Secretary for the Far East, at a time when Laos had moved to center stage in our effort to contain communism in Southeast Asia. The second Ambassador was Horace Smith, who did not speak a word of French.

Q: You were in Laos from when to when?

DEAN: 1956 to 1958. As the lowest member of the Political Section, I was the French speaker on the team. I worked with the Prime Minister, Souvanna Phouma, an outspoken Francophile and an avowed neutralist. The Ambassador at the time, J. Graham Parsons, who had been kind enough to select me to go to Vientiane, was close to Secretary Dulles and did not believe that countries should follow a neutralist course; rather, they should choose either "to be with us or against us".

Q: Did Parsons buy this? This was Dulles' line?

DEAN: Yes, but he was the executor of this policy. My wife and I had this personal relationship with Souvanna Phouma. We were asked at times to go to his house and play bridge in the evening. At the time, it became clear to me that the French did not believe that the policy pursued by Ambassador Parsons was the right one in Laos. I had a particularly close relationship with the adviser to Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma. His name was Mathieu. He was a military officer. He wrote speeches for the King; then, he wrote the answer for the Prime Minister, and then the Prime Minister would make a speech which required a response from the President of the National Assembly.

All the speeches were written by the same man: Mathieu. My wife and I got along with him. The Ambassador asked me to report directly to him, thereby knowing what was going on in Laos. There was no doubt that Mathieu was the best informed foreigner In the country. It was a time when the CIA sent an extremely able Station Chief. His name was Henry Hecksher. Henry and I got to be friends. From time to time, he would ask me: "Can you do this?" I felt my job was always to be helpful to my colleagues - so I did. One day, Hecksher asked me whether I could take a suitcase to the Prime Minister. The suitcase contained money, but I did not know that. Since I had easy access to most Lao, I complied. Whereupon, I received an official reprimand from the Secretary of State that I had abused my functions as a Foreign Service Officer, since a State Department Officer is not allowed "to pass funds"

Q: In the first place, how did whoever did the reprimanding action at the State Department find out?

DEAN: Somebody must have informed them. I never saw any difference between members of the Embassy. We were all supposed to be one team. What I did find out was that not only a suitcase was taken to the Prime Minister, but several suitcases full of money were being ferried over to the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Phoui Sananikone, who was much more In line with the official American position on Laos. But the delivery of these suitcases was not entrusted to me.

Unfortunately, events lead to a political confrontation between Souvanna Phouma, the neutralist, and Phoui Sananikone who was basically very pro-Thai and lent the American Embassy his ear. Souvanna was forced out of office in 1958, which coincided with the end of my tour.

Phoui Sananikone took over the reins of the government and initiated a more hostile policy towards the Pathet Lao. Souvanna Phouma's half-brother, Souvanna Vong, was Head of the Pathet Lao. The two brothers always kept some channels of communication open. Souvanna Phouma was a great believer in finding a negotiated solution. Phoui Sananikone not at all. He was more interested in fighting the Pathet Lao and favored the business interests in Southern Laos. My Ambassador, J. Graham Parsons, appeared to prefer Phoui to Souvanna. I do remember something which I think is of interest to future generations of Foreign Service officers. J. Graham Parsons was a reflective ambassador. He would write thinkpieces to the Secretary of State. Foster Dulles. Then. he would call me in and say: "John. (and I was then the lowest man on the totem pole) I know you disagree with this paper, so would you please write one paragraph, no longer than a page, and I will put it at the end of my message?" He started the paragraph. "My political officer, John Gunther Dean, disagrees with me. His views are" and I provided the rest. I thought, for a junior officer, I could not ask for anything more. I did differ, but I was pleased that I was allowed to put my analysis forward without having my criticism held against me.

Then, Parsons was recalled to Washington to take up the position of Assistant Secretary of State for the Far East. We received a new ambassador by the name of Horace Smith.

Q: Before we do that. what was the situation in Laos when you were there at that time?

DEAN: No, the joint government came much later, when I served again in Laos in the 1970s. The Pathet Lao were still up in the hills or on the Plaine des

Jarres. They were not yet a major military force nor was Laos yet a divided country. The King was still quite respected around the country. His son may be less so. But it was the beginning of the CIA training and arming the Meo hill tribes against the Pathet Lao. This trend was accelerated after the new Ambassador, Horace Smith, arrived at post. He arrived in Vietnam toward the end of 1957, Horace Smith was a China expert and spoke Chinese, Unfortunately, he did not speak a word of French. The working language in Laos was French. It was used in public speeches, in written communications with the government and in daily contact with the elite. Even among educated Lao, they used French among themselves. The Ambassador's inability to speak French made it difficult for him to communicate with the leading personalities of the Kingdom.

My wife and I were asked to help him. Ambassador Smith was a nice man, but people wondered whether he was the right man for the job. To assist in the communication, Ambassador Smith asked me to accompany him on his calls. The Ambassador would say something, and I would translate it into French. When the King, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, or the Commanding General of the Lao Armed Forces spoke, I would translate into English and at the same time take notes. My wife and I played a similar role at the Residence when the Ambassador entertained. At one point, we were asked by Ambassador Smith to move into his residence to help him entertain. Later in 1958, when I accompanied the Ambassador on his calls, he said: "John, you know what to say". I would be allowed to say more or less what I knew was on his mind. I would present that point of view and take notes when the person answered. While the Ambassador was nominally in charge, there was another person at the post, the Head of the CIA, Henry Hecksher. who was both professionally able

and spoke good French. Soon, the officials in the Lao Government and in the Lao Armed Forces began to realize that the real power at the Embassy was not the Ambassador but the CIA Station Chief. I had good relations with Henry Hecksher. But it seemed to me that his orders were quite different from the policy pursued by the Ambassador. The Ambassador was supposed to support the Lao Government and basically not rock the boat. Henry Hecksher was committed to opposing the neutralist Prime Minister and perhaps bring about his downfall. That is what happened in 1958, and the pro-American and anti-Pathet Lao Prime Minister Phoui Sananikone took charge. American resources and support were funneled to Phoui's Government, probably at the expense of French influence, which had supported Souvanna Phouma. Phoui Sananikone, former President of the National Assembly and then Prime Minister, and his brother Ngon, were basically nice human beings. They were Bangkok-oriented. Souvanna Phouma was Paris-oriented. He was a prince from the ruling class. He was nationalist but looked to France not only to oppose communist expansionism but he also feared encroachment of the Vietnamese and Thais on his territory. He thought that the best way was to stick with the French. His policy was more oriented toward keeping Laos from being dismembered by neighbors and less motivated by fighting communism. In all these attitudes, Souvanna had a lot in common with Prince Sihanouk. Perhaps Souvanna was come educated than his Cambodian colleague.

The dichotomy in the American leadership in Laos got to be known in Washington. In 1958, when I returned from Laos, a Committee had been established in Washington on how to avoid a leadership conflict, a turf battle within large diplomatic missions overseas.

In 1960, after John F. Kennedy was elected, one of the first steps he took was to write a letter which has been institutionalized ever since. It is the Letter of the President to the Ambassador. It says that "You, Mr. Ambassador, are responsible to me for all the activities going on in the country of your jurisdiction, whether they are military, political, intelligence, financial, agricultural, economics, drugs, etc. except if there is a military command which is directly responsible to a higher American military authority outside the country." This letter was designed to make the American ambassador the coordinator of all American activities in the country of his accreditation. It meant that if the Drug Enforcement Agency wanted to run a certain operation, it needed the approval of the ambassador. If the CIA wanted to penetrate a certain institution, it needed the approval of the resident ambassador. If there was a conflict between U.S. agricultural interests shipping U.S. wheat or rice to a country, versus the Secretary of the Treasury making the money available for this transaction, the coordinator in the field was the ambassador. It also meant that the ambassador had to be well informed on all activities carried out by the representatives of U.S. departments and agencies within the diplomatic mission he is leading. Hence, when you have several intelligence agencies in large diplomatic missions and turf battles develop, the ambassador must arbitrate. If you have a professional ambassador at the post, he usually can weigh the pros and cons and make a decision on the spot. He does not have to consult "Washington". The Presidential Letter says: "You are in charge" so, you do it. It can happen that, for example, on drug enforcement issues, the CIA representative may have different views than the DEA officer at the post. The military may have a conflict with one of the Intelligence Agencies. They may be targeting the same person -- which could be a disaster. Both of them may be running against a double agent.

In the economic area, we may be dumping PL-480 rice into a country which is actually exporting rice grown at home. You, ambassador, are in charge of this. I would think this letter, which has been used now for the last 40 years, is one important reason why in sensitive posts the professional ambassador makes a difference. A political appointee having to arbitrate the differences among U.S. departments and agencies may not know all the ramifications of every decision which is to be made. On the other hand, most career people do have the background. Let me give you an example. A wife of a very prominent Prime Minister was deeply Involved in the sale of drugs. We knew that. When the Prime Minister refused to sign a certain piece of paper which we wanted signed, we had to threaten the Prime Minister, or at least make it known, that we knew that his wife was very much involved in drugs. The paper was signed. The ambassador, as coordinator of U.S. activities abroad, is probably the only way to avoid in the field what is a problem in Washington where every department and every agency runs its own policies and operations. While theoretically the National Security Adviser to the President is supposed to be the coordinator, I don't think that every problem can be resolved from thousands of miles away. A good relationship between the National Security Adviser in Washington and the Ambassador at a sensitive post is very helpful to the over-all interests of the United States.

Q: Tell me, while you were in Laos, from 1956 to 1958, what was the the importance of Laos?

DEAN: It was being built up, artificially I think, as a major point of confrontation. If you think at one point there was a Bermuda Conference with British Prime Minister MacMillan involved with the American President

in trying to diffuse the confrontratlon in Laos, while most average Americans had never even heard of that far away place. Laos had become a flashpoint where the U.S. saw its interests being challenged by the communist world through the communist Pathet Lao. I thought this conflict had been blown up beyond our real national interests. We saw the Pathet Lao not as a national force, but as a prolongation of the communist Vietnamese and the communist Chinese. We saw Laos as part of a global challenge. The Bermuda Conference was held because it was feared that this regional confrontation could spread into a broader conflict. Mind you, we were living in an era of "containing communism".

Q: At the Embassy, were we saying that maybe this thing was getting exaggerated? You were a Junior Officer. Were people pretty much on board that this was the navel of the universe?

DEAN: Since I had been close to Souvanna Phouma personally and I played the role of liaison with the French, I supported Souvanna's neutral policy. With the approval of Ambassador Parsons, I could make known my views. I was allowed to dissent. Most of my colleagues thought their job was to support the new Lao Government under Phoui Sananikone which opposed neutralists and gave priority to fighting the communists. Also, many officers in the Mission were CIA staff involved in supporting the Meo forces fighting the Pathet Lao. There was relatively little dissent in our Mission. After the U.S. elections in 1958. when Governor Harriman entered the Lao scene, he supported again a neutralist general as counter weight to the warrior clan. That was in 1961-1962. It also reflected a slight change in U.S. policy. Dulles had disappeared from the scene. The elections in 1960 brought Kennedy to the fore and an effort was made

to find a negotiated solution. It was Harriman who at that point succeeded to deflate the Laos confrontation.

I would like to pay a tribute to a person who may still be alive: Campbell James. He was a CIA officer. His grandfather had been one of the founders of the Pennsylvania Railroad. He was quite flamboyant. I had started at my home regular roulette evenings. I learned how to be the croupier to run the roulette table. People were able to bet small amounts . I held the bank. This was a good way for the Lao military, Lao politicians, and foreign diplomats to come to my house. People of high rank came to our home to mix, talk, and enjoy themselves. Campbell James, who came from a well-to-do family, said: "John, why don't you introduce me to your friends?" I did. I felt -- and I still feel today -- that whether you work for this department or that agency, we all work for Uncle Sam. While he may have had different reasons for coming to my house, he was my colleague. When I was scheduled to depart post, I turned over most of my contacts to Campbell James, who continued to run roulette evenings and used fun evenings to make friends among the Lao military who loved gambling. Campbell James and I had contact with many foreign missions: Poles, Canadians, Indians... These roulette evenings helped to keep all channels open.

Perhaps the most important result of my tour of duty in Laos was the letter from the American President to the Ambassador which put an end to confrontation between different U.S. departments and agencies at diplomatic missions abroad, especially between the CIA and the Department of State. At least, that was the purpose of the Presidential Letter making the Chief of Mission the Coordinator of all U.S. activities under his jurisdiction.

Q: It became a very important instrument. Some ambassadors used it; some did not; but they had the authority up to a point.

DEAN: I used it extensively later, wherever I was assigned as Chief of Mission. Some called me a "meddler", an "intervener". Years later, when I appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for confirmation. Senator Javits chastised me and said: "If you are confirmed, Mr. Dean, will you continue to intervene in the domestic affairs of the country where you are stationed?" I think I replied to the satisfaction of the Senators, because I was confirmed. But when you are the American Ambassador , you have the means at your disposal to influence the situation. The naked truth is that the Ambassador is more "than a reporter." Often, he can't help but take positions. Whether you call this "interference" ... I don't know. For example, when you answer the question to the King "Are you in favor of this?" and you reply: "Yes", you have "intervened". Most of the time, when it's a vital issue, you can't say: "I am going to get my instructions from the State Department and I will get back to you." Your personal relationship with the interlocutor and his confidence in you matters. That is why I do believe that the selection of ambassadors is a very important process. Yes, there are many situations where the ambassador's advice or opinion is a form of intervention in the internal affairs of a country.

Q: While you were in Laos, was any European press present during the time you were there?

DEAN: It was still off the beaten path and foreign journalists were a rare breed. The medical facilities in Laos were also very limited. That kept some people away. For example, foreign women were reluctant to have their baby in Laos. My wife happened to be pregnant in Laos. Everyone urged her to go to the American Hospital in Bangkok but my

wife replied: "I prefer to stay with my husband." I have one son who was born in Laos. Quite often, he has to explain to a Passport Officer why he was born in Laos. At the time, there was only one hospital in Vientiane: the French military hospital. That is where our older son was born. The Lao have remained themselves. Western ways have not had a significant impact. They are basically nice, decent people who got hurt when Laos became a bone of contention between the West and the communist world.

Q: Let's go to 1958. Where did you go then?

DEAN: In 1958, I got orders to go to East Africa. I was supposed to go to Nairobi. But before proceeding to Nairobi, I was first sent to Washington to attend the mid-career course. I never worried about promotions. They came by themselves. Once back in Washington, I was told: "You speak good French. We are going to open up some new posts in Africa and you are the right man for that job." Togo had been a German colony before World War I and some of the old Togolese still spoke German. French is the official language. "We want you to open the post in Lome, Togo". I wrote my mother the good news; "I'm going to Lome." She wrote back: "Oh, congratulations ! You are going to Rome." I replied: "No, Mom, I'm going to Lome in Togo. It's right next to Upper Volta." She said: "Upper Volta? Where is Lower Volta?" I said: "Let me explain to you. Togo was a German colony. It is now a U.N. Trust Territory under French administration !"

In Washington, I was instructed to first proceed to Paris because the Consulate in Togo was going to be under the supervision of the Paris Embassy. I said: "You mean my supervisor is going to be living in

Paris, a couple of thousand miles away? That's great! I'm all for that !" In Paris, I saw Ambassador Amery Houghton who asked his Administrative Assistant to give me $5,000 in cash and a small code book. The latter was tiny -- about four inches by three inches. "In case of emergency, you use that to send coded messages to Paris." I was also given a small American flag. With the good wishes of Ambassador Houghton, I was put on a plane to Dakar and looked at a number of other African posts before proceeding to Togo.

I also went to look at Abidjan; Liberia (where the only good road at that time was the paved road from Monrovia to the Firestone plantation). I also went to look at Guinea. Then, I went to Accra where I met the American Ambassador. Embassy Accra offered administrative support in my assignment to open the Consulate in Togo. I was given a car in which I drove to Lome.

Lome was a very small town. I think I was through Lome before I knew that I had been in Lome. I tried to find a hotel and I did. After finding a lodging, I went to the Post Office and said: "I would like to register the address of the American Consulate" and suggested that I may be getting telegrams via the local post office. Next, I put down a deposit, and returned to the hotel to get a room. I was given a room which was in the annex of the hotel. There was no air-conditioning; no overhead fan; but I had a mosquito net. It was March 22, 1959. I also sent a message to Washington saying: opened Post - March 22. 1959".

Q: I take it your wife was not with you.

DEAN: No, I was all by myself. In my room, at the hotel, I had a small

fan on a chair, and there was no private toilet. My room was next to the public toilets. One day, as I woke up, I noticed a rather odd smell. There was an overflow from the toilet next door to my bedroom. I complained. I was moved into a better room.

Then, I had the very interesting job of making all the administrative arrangements involved in opening a post. I had to find lodgings for all future American employees who were scheduled to join me. I had to lease a building which would become a Consulate, and interview local Togolese for staffing the Consulate local secretaries, general service assistants, chauffeurs, translators, etc.. To carry out my responsibilities, I established relations with the French Governor, who was favorably disposed toward the U.S. It was the last year that France was in charge of the U.N. Trust Territory of Togo.

Q: Your arrival was before Togo became independent?

DEAN: It only became independent in April 1960. I arrived in March 1959. I was the first foreign representative to Togo to be accredited. It had been decided that after the Trusteeship had come to an end, the Togolese leader, Sylvanus Olympio, would become President. In 1959, Olympio was only Prime Minister. Olympio was a very able and nice person. Olympio had been a Director of the United Africa Company which was a well-known Trading Company in England. Olympio had been raised in England where he had attended the London School of Economics. He spoke still some German which he had learned in grammar school before 1914. He also spoke rather good French, but English was definitely his first language. He was to become Togo's first President.

I then started to look for real estate to lease. I found a large house but it needed some alterations. This meant further delay in having my family join me. From March onward, I was all alone in Togo. There was nobody else from Washington to help me at this stage. I had to go and get another house and an office. For the office, I leased a villa next to Mr. Olympio's personal home. I am mentioning this because its location was going to play a major role. In 1963 or 1964, Olympio was assassinated as he was climbing over the wall between his house and our Chancery. He died in the arms of the American Ambassador, Mr. Pullada, after I had left the post. Who killed him? Today's Chief of State, General Eyadema who then was a Sergeant in the army !

Q: Very sad.

DEAN: Olympio was the first African Chief of State to be assassinated.

A few months later, in the Summer of 1959, an American Administrative Officer arrived. Finally, a Principal Officer was assigned to take charge of the post. He was Jesse McKnight. My wife and three children joined me in the late Summer of 1959.

In April 1960, independence came to Togo. The French Government had sent the Baron de Testa to be the Diplomatic Adviser to President Olympio. Since he did not enjoy good relations with Olympio, de Testa was sent back to France, just before independence. At the same time, Olympio sent a message to Secretary of State Herter: "You have this chap, John Gunther Dean, down here, who is Consul. He opened your post last year. We get along well with him. In a few weeks, we will have our independence celebrations. Would you put him at our disposal as Diplomatic Adviser for a short-while? He speaks English and French

and we have to use French in every day communications. He also speaks German. We were a German colony. In short, we need some help". The Secretary of State approved the request. I was asked to go every morning to work with President Olympio and his team. Every day, I went to the big castle overlooking the ocean which the Germans had built as their Governor's Palace, to work with Olympio. Independence came, and the celebration was grand. For the United States, the Head of the Delegation to the Independence celebrations was Attorney General Rogers who later became Secretary of State.

When the celebration was over, I was asked to come to the newly established Togolese Ministry and help President Olympio to reply to the mountains of mail which had come for the independence celebration. Olympio had received messages from many dignitaries, among them: President Eisenhower, President de Gaulle, the Queen of England, and the Presidents of China, Taiwan, the Soviet Union, etc.. All messages had to be answered in French. So, I submitted a draft to Mr. Olympio and then took the incoming mail home and showed my suggested reply to my wife so that there would not be any mistakes. Then, the Togolese typed up the letters and I would submit the correspondence to the President. I remained always deferential. Olympio was an impressive man. I liked him and it was mutual. He signed most of the correspondence submitted for his signature. Among the mail to be answered was a letter from His Holiness the Pope. So, I looked up in a French protocol guidebook how to address correspondence to the Pope. We had to answer all communications in French. How does the Chief of State close his communication addressed to the Pope? The French protocol book states that it depends - if the Chief of State is Catholic, he signs one way, if he is not Catholic, he signs another way. So, I went to Olympio with the mail and said: "Here are a couple of letters,

Mr. President, for your signature. By the way, Mr. President, are you by any chance Catholic?" "Yes, I am." He continued signing. I went outside to look at the protocol book. It said that if the Chief of State is a practicing Catholic, he signs one way. If he is not a practicing Catholic, he signs another way. I had a good friend and colleague in Accra who was a very good Catholic and I asked him: "John, how does it work out here in West Africa, practicing or non-practicing?" He replied: "Well, it depends. Since there are some Africans who have several wives, they can attend Mass, but they cannot take communion. But if they are monogamous, then they can take communion. If they take communion, then they are fully practicing Catholics." I said" "Thank you John, that's very helpful." The next day, I went back to the President and said: "Tell me, Mr. President, do you ever go and take communion?" I could not ask him "Are you monogamous?" I knew some of his ministers in the cabinet were Catholic but were polygamous. He said: "Yes, I take communion. Why do you need to know?" I said: "The way you sign your letter to the Pope. In your case, you sign 'You Devoted son'. I then showed him the protocol guidebook to support my point. He signed the letter to the Pope just as he signed all the other letters to de Gaulle, Eisenhower, the President of the Soviet Union, and all the other leaders who had written him on the occasion of Togo's accession to independence.

Q: You know, the French must have been spitting mad at this.

DEAN: No, I don't think so. What I always do when I have a problem is to keep people informed. That is the best way you avoid a problem. Whatever I did, I told my colleague on the French side. When I had a letter from the President of mainland China or one from the Chief of

State of Taiwan, I answered Taiwan first, and after a while answered the letter from Beijing. Olympio signed both letters but Taiwan was quicker in establishing a resident mission in Lome. But I also had to answer the Queen of England. Olympic had gone to university in England, the London School of Economics, and he had been a member of the Board of Directors of an important British company. Writing to the Queen was a different matter for Olympio. This was the first time he would write to Her Majesty in his capacity as Chief of State of a sovereign country. Do you know how to address a letter in French to the Queen of England?

Q: "Chère Majesté"?

DEAN: No, "Madame". Olympio answered exactly what you said: "Votre Majesté". He first refused to sign that letter. He said: "John, it must be at least "Your Majesty, Your Gracious Majesty." I said: "Here it is in the protocol book: "Madame". The envelope is addressed differently: Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of This, and Duchess of That, and all the other titles which she has. Again, I showed him the French protocol book. Olympio was not satisfied: "Isn't there another book you can show me?" I said: "Look, English protocol and French protocol may not be the same, but you are supposed to use the French language. That was part of the agreement of independence." So, he signed the letter. We remained good friends and I saw him again when he came to Washington as the guest of John F. Kennedy.

Q: Let's stick to the time you were there.

DEAN: One of the first assignments I had as adviser to President Olympio was to help with the visit to Togo, after independence, by the last

German Governor of Togo in 1914, the Duke von und zu Mecklenburg, a relative of the Russian Czars through Catherine the Great. He came with his own "Leibartz", his personal doctor accompanying him. Ever so often, one heard a little ring from the doctor's watch and he would say: "Your Grace, It's time to take your pill." The Duke was an old man. He spoke not a word of English. He spoke fluent French and German. I accompanied him on his trips to help him in translations and to facilitate his travels. Before he came, all the constructions and lasting achievements had been attributed by the Togolese to the German colonial period. The Togolese would say: "Oh, the Germans did that." So, I took him to all these places, and quite often the Duke would say: "Well, this did not exist in my time. When was that built?" He was an interesting person. The Togolese brought out all the German speakers they had, Togolese who had gone to German schools or had been brought to Germany before 1914. It was a very sentimental event and the Togolese were very pleased to have his visit. Perhaps the Togolese also hoped that the visit would help the German Bundes Republic of 1960 to consider assisting Togo in its development as a sovereign nation. On the whole, the Togolese are one of the most educated people of West Africa. The country of Togo, unlike many West African nations, is long and narrow, like a sliver into the heart of Africa. The racial groups align horizontally. Hence, as you went from the Atlantic Ocean inland, you encountered different racial groups. The Ewe race, which was also Olympio's race, was spread between Togo and Ghana. The Hausa people inhabit the inland areas of West Africa and are completely different from the Ewe. The Hausa are largely Muslim and over time intermarried with Arabs. I found that Olympio was very much western-oriented, very pro-American and pro-West in general. He was interested in developing economically Togo.

He succeeded partially because the Grace Company from America got involved with the extraction of minerals. The Germans then built a port years later.

During my time in Togo, the struggle for power was between Grunitzky and Olympio, but Olympio became President and stayed President until he was assassinated. There was, and still is, a certain rivalry among Western nations for influence. In Africa, I always felt that there is enough work to be done by the West. Instead of rivalry, it would be preferable to have a certain amount of cooperation to avoid duplication and waste.

Q: Were the Soviets involved in this at all?

DEAN: No, not really. The Soviets were not players in Togo. The only nation in West Africa which might be open to Soviet influence was Guinea. In Guinea, the Soviets played a significant role just after independence, when Sekou Toure walked out of the French Franc Zone and declined to work with the French. From 1960 onward, 'the newly Independent countries of West Africa which had been under French colonial administration, remained in the French Franc Zone and continued working with France for the next 40 years. Guinea was the exception.

Q: Was it a chasse gardée?

DEAN: The French provided a lot of help to the newly independent West African states. Their assistance was quite generous, both in the military and economic fields. Some of the French assistance was provided through the Lome Convention, or through the European Union. The cultural aspect was also Important for France and led to the establishment of Universities in Dakar, in Abidjan, and in the Cameroon. The French Oil Company

ELF/TOTAL brought in a number of oil wells in the former French African colonies, for example in Gabon. Humanitarian assistance came also from voluntary associations, for example: Medecins Sans Frontieres. Above all, the former French African colonies remained in the French West Africa Franc area, which gave their currencies value and convertibility. Guinea was the only country to walk out of the French Franc Zone and its currency became nearly worthless. While Sekou Toure was able to establish a very independent Guinea, the country's economy suffered enormously. The Russians gave them some assistance, but on the whole, the West stayed out for many years.

Guinea does have natural resources, and a joint American-French operation invested large amounts in a bauxite/aluminum facility (Harvey -Pechiney). Guinea fell behind, and still today, 40 years later, suffers from the fact that they factored themselves out politically and economically from the area.

Yes, France also benefited from their close links with their former colonies. French remained the administrative language for most former African colonies. French culture was paramount and was actively promoted. French Africa remained a market for French exports, and African commodities found markets in Europe. For example, the French made cacao a big export of the Ivory Coast. In 1954, as France withdrew from Indochina, rubber trees were sent by French plantations in Vietnam by plane to West Africa. Today, rubber Is a major export of Ivory Coast. Togo is a poor country, but its people are relatively well-educated and able. Many Togolese found work as clerks in other French African countries. Colonialism was not all bad. One of the worst features of colonialism was racism, the supression of indigenous cultures and lack of respect for the African Individual. Compared to Liberia, which had been independent

for over one hundred years, West Africa had a decent road system, well-trained military officers, teachers with school buildings, dispensaries staffed by indigenous and foreign staff, etc... In Ghana, the British left behind a rather well educated upper class. The same is true for Nigeria. In Togo, independence came to a competent people, in a country with few natural resources.

Q: Did we find ourselves as a policy saying: "Okay, here are these West African countries. We are going to keep our presence here, but we are certainly not going to try to supplant the French". So. were we sort of pussyfooting around to make sure the French did not get their noses out of joint?

DEAN: I think this is not a bad description. I honestly thought that at that stage in history, there was still a feeling of "We, the U.S., can't do it all." This approach may have changed in those countries where we would like to participate in sharing markets, develop resources, or for strictly strategic reasons. For example, Dakar has always been a jumping off point for air and naval traffic from Europe to South America. New technology may also change the strategic importance of specific areas. Today, I think the competition may well be between the U.S. and the European Union for influence in many parts of Africa. It is no longer France alone, but the European Union that defends certain economic advantages in Africa. But, more than 40 years ago, the U.S. was not unhappy to "play second fiddle." From Togo, I went to Mali.

Q: You were there in Mali from…

DEAN: From March 1960 until July 1961. From Togo. I was assigned as Principal Officer in Bamako, French Sudan.

Q: That is a name that is completely lost.

DEAN: Yes, the French Sudan is known today by its ancient name of MALI. When assigned to Bamako, the French Sudan was part of a Federation with Senegal, which had its capital in Dakar. In short, I was heading a Consulate under the jurisdiction of the American Ambassador in Dakar, Mr. Villard. Before taking up my new posting, I took a vacation in Switzerland. While relaxing in the mountains of Switzerland, I received notification from Washington that there had been a break-up of the Mali Federation. Modibo Keita, a Malian who had been a minister in the French Government, left Dakar in a huff and declared the Republic of Mali (in what used to be the French Sudan). At that point, I sent a message, at my own expense, to the State Department: "Am proceeding directly to Bamako" and booked a flight from Paris to Bamako.

By the time I arrived in Bamako, the split-up of the Federation had been consummated. Modibo Keita was declared President of the Mali Republic. I went to call on him. The American Government followed suit by declaring the post of Bamako directly linked to Washington. All links between the American Consulate in Bamako and the American Embassy in Senegal were severed. My boss now was the Department of State in Washington. Letters of credence as Chargé d'Affaires à pied were sent to me. It meant I was Chief of Mission, and for the foreseeable future, the American Embassy in Bamako would not have a resident U.S. Ambassador. I was "in charge" but had no American staff.

Quite often. I drove up to the Presidential Palace which was on top of a small hill overlooking the city in order to meet President Modibo Keita. He was very pleased that the U.S. Government, as the French, had

immediately recognized the newly independent state of Mali. He asked what sports I was interested in. I replied that I loved to play tennis. "Do you play volleyball?" I replied that I had played volleyball in the past. "Do you want to come and play volleyball with me up here from time to time?" It took me no time to accept his offer. Modibo Keita was about 6 feet 5 inches tall, a good looking man, and an excellent athlete. From time to time, I went up and played volleyball with him, which established a relaxed relationship with him. Later, when the American staff had joined me, I took my colleagues with me and we had a regular American-Malian sports competition.

Q: We had nothing there.

DEAN: For the first few weeks, I was all alone. Both my bedroom and office were at the Grand Hotel, which was quite grand and comfortable. Later, all other foreign missions got their start there. One of the first to arrive were the Soviets. The French had their own building. Everybody else had to look for lodging and office space. All foreigners lived at first together at "Le Grand Hotel". The Russians would come and say: "Hey, I'm going back to Moscow. I need some dollars. Can you give me some dollars? I want to buy something there." I would say "Okay" and give him $20 and he gave me some local currency. Mali had remained in the West African French Franc Zone and its currency was convertible.

Then. the revolutionary shadow of Sekou Toure began to fall on Mali. Modibo Keita was flirting with the idea of establishing Mali's own currency, the "Malian Franc". Next. he asked the French military forces to leave Mali. The Soviet Mission was quite popular among the Malian politicians. The Soviets offered aid and advisers from Guinea. The Advisers came from Guinea to Bamako to offer their services. Mali

showed its political leanings by holding protest marches at night with torches, objecting to the killing of Lumumba in the Congo. The Malians made it clear at the time that they thought foul play was involved in Lumumba's death, and the West was responsible. It was the beginning of discussions among Malians whether to leave the West African French Franc Zone and discontinue membership in the French Union, and questioning their ties to the former colonial power.

With storm clouds on the horizon, I received a phone call from Fernand Wibaux, who was the French High Commissioner in Mali. Prior to his diplomatic posting, Wibaux had been the Director General of the Office du Niger, a 10,000 hectares (25,000 acres) project to grow rice and cotton in Mali. It was a highly successful project in developing the agriculture of that relatively poorly endowed country. When I met with the High Commissioner, he asked me to do him a favor: "The French troops are standing down. Would you come and see the last parade?' General Charles was the commander of the French troops stationed in Mali. I replied that we were NATO allies and I found it natural to stand next to the Frenchman, taking the salute of the departing troops. Then Wibaux said: "Don't be surprised if the Malians ask you to help them in the training of their troops." "Why not" I replied, "but let's wait and see what happens." It was my impression that the French had even suggested the idea to the Mali military. Perhaps they thought better American advisers than Russian officers.
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My attention then turned to finding office space. A former French bank building was offered to me. Soon, the first American colleagues began to arrive to staff the post: an Economic Officer, an Administrative Officer. an Economic Aid Officer, and a Political Officer. The Head of what became the Economic Aid Mission was Sam Adams, a very distinguished Afro-American

who later became U.S. Ambassador to a country in Africa. We became good friends. The new head of the Political Section, Robert V. Keeley, became my best friend in the Foreign Service. One day, I received a request from Modibo Keita to call on him. He said: "John, I have André Malraux coming as the Representative of Charles de Gaulle. His flight arrives at 4:00 in the morning. Would you accompany your French colleague to meet him, thereby showing Western solidarity on what I am trying to do in Mali." It was an interesting experience for me to meet with one of Europe's leading authors and cultural personalities.

Q: Was he Minister of Culture at that time?

DEAN: Yes, he was Minister of Culture under De Gaulle. But he was sent on many diplomatic missions by General de Gaulle. He was going to play a role later in my life with Robert Kennedy. When I first met him in Bamako, in the early hours of the morning, he thanked me for meeting his plane, and revealed the reason for his coming to Mali. "We have to try to keep the Malians in the West African French Franc Zone. We don't want to repeat Guinea and be overrun by Soviet advisers and Soviet ideology in Mali." Malraux also stressed the "strategic location" of Mali. I never thought of Mali in these terms. Mali is south of Algeria and north of the Ivory Coast and Guinea, the latter two leading to the Atlantic Ocean. It's the ancient trade route between the Arab North Africa and the Negro tribes in Western Africa. He also urged us to keep each other informed so that there would not be any duplication of effort.

Shortly thereafter, I went to see Modibo Keita and he said he would like to establish his own currency. Instead of giving a negative or

positive answer, I took a piece of paper and drew up a bank balance sheet with credit and debit on opposite sides. I showed what items to put under assets, and what to list under debits. in a Central Bank balance sheet. I explained that you cannot just go down into the vault of the Central Bank and take the bank notes as if you had earned the money. We discussed the need for drawing up a national budget and the advantages of a convertible currency. What I had learned about finance at Harvard came in very handy. I was surely not the only one who tried to convince President Keita of the advantages for Mali to remain in a convertible currency zone. Malraux made the same points and he undoubtedly had much greater Influence with Modibo Keita than I ever had.

In the course of this continuous dialogue I had with President Keita, I was asked what I thought about Mali establishing its own Airline. My response was very negative because I thought Mali was too small a country and had an insufficient number of air travelers to make Air Mali a profitable operation. Despite my advice, for a very brief period, a few planes flew under the Air Mali flag. Then, common sense prevailed and Air Mali became part of the regional airline: Air Afrique.

But independence and the departure of the French military also meant that President Keita started to look around to find new sources of assistance for equipping and modernizing the Malian Army. When approached by Modibo Keita whether the U.S. might be Interested in this role, I replied that I would query Washington. Specifically, Modibo Keita wanted training for paratroopers, because the huge size of the country and the desert in the north may require the means to move troops quickly and by air.

The U.S. Government agreed to send a couple of airplanes and trainers to teach the Malians to jump out of planes. A Military Aid Mission was established at Embassy Bamako, and a competent Lieutenant Colonel arrived to head the mission. He took charge of all military cooperation. An agreement was signed --military to military -- which undoubtedly contributed to the good relations between the U.S. and this new West African independent republic, which has been continual for more than 40 years. The military agreement was matched by an economic assistance agreement which was signed in I960. All along the period I remained in charge of this growing U.S. Mission, I kept my French colleague informed of what we were doing with the Malian Authorities.

Q: Were the French disturbed about this?

DEAN: No, I don't think so. At this stage, the important objective was to keep the Soviets out. If we, the U.S., would not have done it, the Soviets were willing to move in, as they had done in Guinea.

Q: Were the Malians getting their idea from Guinea or from Senegal?

DEAN: The French role in Senegal goes back a couple of centuries. In Mali, ex French Sudan, the French presence was much more recent. Some Senegalese had been French citizens for over 200 years, as for example in St. Louis du Senegal which goes back to Louis XV.

The Malians were aware of the problems the Guineans had with the Soviets, but Sekou Toure was an African hero, a nationalist, who had dared to defy De Gaulle. The Malians did not want to offend anybody. They did not defy De Gaulle. As a matter of fact, Modibo Keita had been a

Minister in the French Government in Paris – just as Houphouet Boigny, of the Ivory Coast, had been. Both African leaders were French-speakers and French-educated. When the West Africans asked for independence, De Gaulle gave it to them. The French helped the newly independent states of West Africa and did not object to anybody else coming to support this effort.

But the French colonial past and traditions surfaced from time to time. One day, the Malian Commander in chief of the Army came to the Embassy and asked if we could provide uniforms for the Malian forces. "But we want the buttons to be not American buttons, but French buttons." Our American officer in charge of the Military Assistance Mission inquired: "What do you mean, French buttons?" "Like French cavalry buttons. Not infantry buttons, but cavalry. They are kind of rounded at the top" was the answer. Our American Lieutenant Colonel explained that "Our buttons are flat" and the Malians got the American variety. Don't let me give the wrong impression. Compared to French and European assistance to Mali, our effort was modest. But it was greatly appreciated and above all, it was timely. Mali is not the most promising country as far as resources are concerned. Foreigners were not lining up to come in to exploit their oil, chrome, or whatever they may have. It was not there. Nonetheless, with our timely efforts, and above all warm personal relationship with the Malian leadership, we built a solid link with a country which became more and more democratic with time.

While I was in charge, we had the visit of Edward Kennedy, who was running for the U.S. Senate that year, and Senator Church. When they saw how hard we worked in Mali and the relations we had established with Africans, they became supporters in my later assignments.

Q: I was wondering about Edward Kennedy only because in his very early years, he was a little bit difficult to handle.

DEAN: I found Edward Kennedy and Frank Church to be very outgoing and friendly. Let me give you an example. All staff of foreign missions lived at the Grand Hotel. The Russians, the Yugoslavs, the Bulgarians, the British, the Israelis, and the Americans were there. Everyone was living in the same place. The evening the Senate Delegation arrived in newly independent Mali, there was a dance at the hotel. All the foreigners danced with each other, and with Malians and other Africans from the region. It was co-existence at its best.

In conclusion, I would say that our timely, energetic presence prevented Mali from going the Guinea way. Mali remained in the French Franc Zone, part of West Africa, and with close links to the West. The U.S. had put its best foot forward and Mali did not present an opportunity for communist countries to subvert it or wean Mali away from the path of democracy. Shortly before my departure, a new American ambassador arrived. I relinquished my chargéship to Ambassador Ken Wright and I left for my next assignment a couple of months later.

Q: You left in 1961.

DEAN: Yes, but before discussing my 4-year Washington assignment, let me just say that in Bamako, I made friends for life with Robert Keeley, one of America's great ambassadors, and John Leonard who left the Foreign Service to become a priest. We are friends still today and see each other regularly. Today, Mali is not a major factor. 40 years ago, newly independent African countries were flirting with the Soviet Union because

they postured as friends of the underprivileged and the poor. Guinea had received from the Soviet Union aid and advisers, but their assistance did not develop the country. Mali has become a democratic success story in West Africa. I would like to believe that our opening an Embassy in 1960 and the programs we started in conjunction with the former colonial power had something to do with it.

Q: You came back in 1961 to Washington.

DEAN: I came back in 1961 to Washington to work in the Bureau of African Affairs. I had known "Soapy" Williams when he came to Africa and I had helped him in collecting African artifacts. Prior to taking the job as Assistant Secretary for Africa, a position only created the year he was given the job, Soapy had been running for the presidency of the United States. He was a liberal Democrat. The Africans liked him and he, in turn, liked Africa.

Q: He had been Governor of Michigan.

DEAN: Right. We knew him slightly, and his wife. Nancy, from Grosse Pointe, Michigan.

Q: You were in African Affairs from 1961 until when?

DEAN: Until 1963.

Q: What was your job?

DEAN: I was Officer in charge of Togolese and Malian Affairs.

Q: Oh, yes.

DEAN: It was a time when African States established their first missions in Washington. My job included duties beyond those linked directly to Togo and Mali. For example, when new African ambassadors and their wives arrived in Washington, I often helped them to establish themselves and open a functioning office. My wife also was helpful to Mrs. Rusk and Mrs. Williams to entertain the wives of the newly arrived African ambassadors, who had quite often not been exposed to life in the capital cities of the world. I worked mostly with the French-speaking Africans. Helping the new African ambassadors to hire local French-speaking staff sometimes gave rise to difficult situations. Attractive Haitian ladies had the professional skills, spoke French and English, and knew their way around Washington. But when the new ambassador found the local female staff more attractive than their own older African wives, it could cause a family problem which ended on the desk of the State Department. Another example was trying to persuade some African servants who were brought by the ambassadors that you don't make a wood fire on the floor of the basement of your house, but you turn up the thermostat of your heating mechanism. For two years, we (my wife and I) worked with many of these new African ambassadors and their staffs in making them feel at home in Washington.

During this 2-year tour, President Olympio came on an official visit to the United States, so did Sekou Toure. All official guests of the President were housed in Blair House. The lady in charge of Blair House showed the visiting President to his rooms and those for his staff. She used to say: "Mr. President, this is your room. Mrs. Lincoln slept in this bed. The room for your foreign minister is on your right. On your left, I have put the governor of the central bank of your country. Then,

upstairs are some rooms for your secretaries." Sekou Toure said: "Send the foreign minister upstairs. Send my secretary to the room next to mine." You can Imagine the reaction of the lady In charge of Blair House!

When Olympio came on an official visit to Washington, I had the privilege of writing a paper for President Kennedy and briefing him for five minutes the day before. He asked for my name. "My name is John Gunther Dean. I was asked to brief you." The next day, I accompanied Olympio on his call on the President of the United States. As I came in, President Kennedy said: "John, so happy to see you again. You have done a wonderful job in Togo." President Kennedy gave me a big build-up, and I felt proud to serve my country. Olympio made a very good impression on all American authorities. He clearly felt at ease in an Anglo-Saxon environment. Little did we realize then that shortly thereafter both would be assassinated. Olympio was assassinated in Togo.

Q: How did we figure... What was the cause of this?

DEAN: The cause of Olympio's assassination was well known at the time. Olympio died in the arms of Ambassador Pulada, the second American ambassador to Togo. Olympio, who had his personal residence next to the U.S. Chancery, climbed over the wall to escape his assassins. The man who held the gun was a sergeant at the time. Today, he is the President of Togo and he holds the rank of General!

Q: How did we view this at the time?

DEAN: Olympio was the first African Chief of State to be assassinated. In the U.S., we were debating whether to cut off aid, or recall our ambassador. We left the decision to the African Chiefs of States who had assembled in Africa to debate what action they would take. They

talked... but did nothing. We followed suit. We did nothing. We did not understand in 1963 that if we thought some sanctions should be taken, we had to be out in front in order to play a role for justice and decency. Olympio's assassination was clearly linked to local Togolese political machinations. But there my also have been some geopolitical considerations, So, since neither the Africans nor the former colonial power imposed meaningful sanctions on the very person who killed Olympio, we decided to stay out of the fray.

Q: Were we sort of waiting to see how the French were going to respond?

DEAN: After the Africans did nothing of consequence, the French recognized the new Togolese Government.

In the Autumn of 1963, I was sent to the United Nations in New York to be one of the advisers to the American Delegation to the General Assembly. My job was to advise on the French-speaking African Delegates who represented 18 countries. The voting pattern of that group in 1963 at the United Nations was well-known. The French-speaking Africans (and that Included the former colonies of Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda) had agreed that they would vote all the same way. Sometimes, they discussed in private caucus how they would vote, before the official vote. In the 1963 U.N. General Assembly, the question of recognition of Mainland China and its seat in the SecurityCouncil came up. In those days, the French Delegation had the most influence with the French-speaking Africans. Hence, I decided to work with them. Ambassador Seydoux of France had agreed with Governor Stevenson, the Chief of the U.S. Delegation, that France would vote against recognition in 1963. That was the last year

the French voted the same way as we did. When the vote on China came up, I was sitting with the American Delegation in the big Assembly Hall. The Assistant Secretary General of the U.K. pulled a name out of the hat and that country was the first to cast its vote. This time it was Gabon. All the countries in the French African block --18 countries -- had the instructions to vote as the other French-speaking Africans. So, here was Gabon, the first one. The Assistant Secretary General called out again: "Gabon! Yes? No?" No answer. "Oui? Non?" I was watching Ambassador Seydoux of France. He gently shook his head in a negative way so that others could see it, and finally Gabon came out with a loud "No". It was the last year France voted with the U.S. on the China issue at the U.N.

Q: China got into the United Nations much later, but we were not getting the African vote.

DEAN: Later, the African vote split, and they did not vote any longer as a block.

Q: China really did not get in until 1975.

DEAN: This, I don't know. But shortly thereafter, the French established a Diplomatic Mission in Beijing. Then, around 1971 or so, France sent its first ambassador, which I will discuss later since the incumbant played a major role in Cambodia. At the U.N. I came again across corruption. I was asked to approach certain delegates to vote a certain way in return for financial favors. Since this was not my job, I would refer the chap to somebody else whose job it was to buy votes. Unfortunately, the delegates of the poorer countries were particularly vulnerable and targeted.

Q: We had somebody with whom you could put them in touch.

DEAN: All major countries at the U.N. had people whose job it is to find the "shortcomings" of individual delegates.

Q: I am told by people who claim to know that when Sukarno or somebody like that would appear on a state visit, you would look around for the stewardesses or what have you. The State Department would say: "We don't do that", but they would contact a DC police officer who had connections. There would be a certain accommodation made.

DEAN: I have stayed out of private lives, both those of my American colleagues and those of foreign dignitaries. I have stayed away from using the frailties of human beings as pressure to obtain a diplomatic success. Also, different cultures have different customs. For example, in the Middle East it's very common to give a new arrival a small present in order to get into his or her graces. This could be interpreted as an effort to undermine your integrity. When a foreign businessman is sent to Lake Tahoe and he gets a long week-end at a lovely lodge where he finds company and money to play at the casino, all this at the expense of the inviting company, is that just showing hospitality to a foreigner or is it a way of getting at his integrity?

Q: It's a way of getting at his integrity.

DEAN: There are two different ways of interpreting the same facts. In our example of Lake Tahoe, one way is to consider it corruption. The other is to count it as an essential expense in the interest of the company. Let us return to the United Nations. Some of the African Delegates come to New York and are tempted by the fast social life of the city. Their financial resources are limited. Am I their moral

shepherd? I don't think so. But there is a difference between a delegate who is a stranger in the U.S. and an American Foreign Service Officer who represents America. Basically, most Americans want their representatives - elected or appointed - to behave in a way to avoid controversy and to set a good example.

Q: We all work on this two-track thing. If you take too high a hand, you are not accomplishing what you are supposed to.

DEAN: If it is to get the delegate's vote. I would just pass him or her on to a colleague. I remember a specific example. The new-born daughter of one of the Chiefs of Missions was going to be baptized. He made it known that he did not have the funds to decorate the chapel with flowers. I did find somebody who provided the needed flowers.

While I was at the U.N. in 1963, an unforgettable event occurred: President Kennedy was assassinated in Texas, I remember I was in the Delegates Lounge having lunch with my French counterpart. Mrs. Pandit Nehru, former President of the United Nations General Assembly, sat on the other side of the room. Somebody from her table came over and said: "Is it true that the President has been shot?" Later, I went into the United Nations General Assembly hall and there Governor Stevenson accepted the condolences of the Chiefs of Missions accredited to the United Nations. The sadness, the silence, the seriousness of the foreign diplomats, reflected the shock of the world to the news but it also showed the respect and perhaps even the affection for the United States and what it stands for. Everybody realized this tragedy also had an Impact on the lives of others in the world. Shortly afterwards, we all flew to Washington to help taking care of the dignitaries who came for the funeral.

Q: We will pick this up in 1963. You finished your time with African Affairs and the United Nations.

DEAN: Then, I was assigned to NATO Affairs, in the European Bureau of the State Department.

Q: Today is September 7, 2000. John, let me have the dates of your assignment to the NATO Desk.

DEAN: From 1963 to 1965. In that section, formally known as the Bureau for Regional Political and Military Affairs, I had an outstanding stellar cast of colleagues. My immediate boss was George Vest. Roz Ridgway worked with me, Ron Spiers was Deputy Director. He later became Under Secretary for Political Affairs at the United Nations. David Popper was the Chief. My job was to backstop the Political Advisers Committee of NATO.

Q: I would like to get the dates.

DEAN: I was there from December 1963 until July of 1965. Then, I left to go to the Embassy in Paris.

Q: Could you tell me a little bit about some of the people you were dealing with? Let's talk about George Vest.

DEAN: George Vest was one of the finest Foreign Service officers I have ever met. He was the head of the political side. Both Roz Ridgway and I were working for George. George was a wonderful boss, and Roz a superb colleague. George was not only an excellent Foreign Service Officer, but he cared about the Foreign Service. I came across George again toward the end of my Foreign Service career. He had been Director General of the Foreign Service

Q: He was Director General later.

DEAN: Yes, later» and he was also Assistant Secretary for Europe for a short time, and had some differences with Dr. Kissinger.

Q: He was actually spokesman for a little while until he found he just did not have the stomach.

DEAN: It's people like George Vest and Roz Ridgway, bright, able, and decent, that made that assignment interesting and enjoyable.

Q: Could you talk about Roz Ridgway at that time a bit?

DEAN; Before her assignment to Washington, Roz had been Political Officer in Italy. She had a very perceptive mind and wrote beautifully. At the time, she was single; we often lunched together and talked. We talked a lot about what we wanted to do in life, and that made for a wonderful relationship. She later had a brilliant career in the Foreign Service.

Q: This was 1963 - 1965. Given a certain general over in France, this was a very interesting time.

DEAN: Yes. General de Gaulle is a very complicated person. It was a time when we were discussing already then the one-pillar versus the two-pillar system in the NATO command structure. Our military insisted on the one-pillar system, i.e. the U.S. remaining the sole power holding the top military job in NATO. As seen through U.S. eyes, in these early days, NATO had the U.S. in charge, and the other countries working together under U.S. leadership. Even then, there were people on both sides of the Atlantic who were suggesting that the time had come to have two pillars, i.e. that this alliance would have a North American pillar and a European pillar, with the top military positions divided up between military officers from both sides. The overall commander would remain American. It did not happen.

My job was NATO's Political Advisers Committee. They met once a week In NATO Headquarters in Europe. It was not a discussion, but most of the time a briefing by Americans on subjects of direct concern to the alliance, Only rarely was there an input by other NATO countries. If, for example, a particularly difficult situation in the eastern Mediterranean was in the news, I would go to the folks in the Department of State in charge of this issue who would provide me with a briefing and action paper. After reediting it for use by NATO. I would send it to our Political Adviser or to the U.S. Ambassador to NATO to be used at the meeting.

Q: These Political Advisers were known as POLADs.

DEAN: Yes. It was more of a briefing than a discussion.

Q: How did this develop? Was this just, you might say, American dominance, arrogance, or lack of interest by other countries?

DEAN: The entire NATO establishment goes back to 1950. It was the time of absolute American supremacy. Therefore, people were delighted to have this American umbrella. As we developed NATO, some Europeans were put in high positions, but the entire decision-making process, and the military command structure, pretty much remained in American hands. We felt that we had the responsibility to bring subjects up for discussion, and we also proposed courses of action.

Q: Let's talk a little bit about the briefing business. Where were you getting your thoughts? Who was supplying you to put the prose together?

DEAN: I would get suggestions from the American Mission to NATO regarding the subjects to be placed on the Agenda. With this list, I would go to

the various bureaus in the Department of State to obtain their briefing papers, or at least a paper on how we see the situation. That was then sent by telegram to the POLADs who either circulated it or discussed it. George Vest, who had been very close to one of the Secretary Generals of NATO, knew exactly how It should be presented.

The other part of my job was to backstop the NATO Science Committee. My interest in Science and Technology stems from that period. One of my duties was to accompany the top American Delegate to the NATO Science Committee meetings: Nobel Prize Winner Isidore Rabi. He needed a Political Adviser like he needed a hole in the head. Professor Rabi won his prize in physics. He played a significant role during World War II in the development of our atomic bomb. Since I had an uncle who was also a Nobel Laureate in physics. Otto Stern, Rabi accepted me and took me along as baggage. But I did begin to understand that the NATO Science Committee discussed issues which were just coming onto the horizon: lasers, environment, atomic fall-out, etc. When I was traveling with Professor Rabi, he explained to me how lasers worked and what they can do. His NATO counterparts were also highly interesting people, especially the scientists from England, France. Italy, and Germany. They often discussed the growing role of Science and Technology in foreign affairs. These prominent scientists would also discuss, at fabulous dinners with excellent wines and brandy, new scientific and technical developments and how these inventions would affect the future of the world. It was a privilege just to listen to people like Sir Zolly Zuckerman discussing how the world was going to change as a result of these inventions.

Q: During this time, as I recall it, lawyers came on the scene, and there was great concern because the Soviets seemed to be putting an inordinate concentration on laser technology. These were considered to be killer lasers that could knock down satellites. Battle theories of lasers and all that.

DEAN: All science and technology creations have a dual use. Back in 2001, I had five operations on my eye. Most of them were executed by laser. You can use the laser to destroy tissue and to heal the retina. You can also use lasers on heavy metals. You can also use lasers for war. Hence, lasers have a dual use. Nearly all chemical inventions have a dual use: to heal or destroy. The discussions among NATO scientists were not geared exclusively on how the Russians would use new inventions but how these Inventions would impact on the world in general.

Q: What were the discussions about information technology? I'm talking about computers. It was still in its infancy.

DEAN: I did not attend these. I think there was discussion outside the conference room on this subject. There was some attention placed on remote sensing. At first, remote sensing was an American monopoly. The Russians also had satellites in space, i.e. seeing from the sky what is happening on our small earth. The technology got so refined that these sensing satellites could even read the licence plate on a car from the sky. This technology also played a role in explaining what happened to the plane of the late President of Pakistan, Zia al-Huq. As long as we had the monopoly of knowing what was going on – and above all our interpretation of photography – other nations had to rely on American technology. For example, is there a build-up of forces in a certain area? From this remote sensing image, you could see two divisions being amassed with armor and tanks. At least, that was our Interpretation of the Images.

As long as we had the monopoly, other countries in NATO were dependent on us. As time went on, other NATO countries began to develop similar remote sensing capability. Shortly before the end of the 20th century, the French and German governments got together to help finance an advanced French satellite system to compete with the American system, thereby breaking the monopoly of interpreting remote sensing intelligence. That is of importance because the interpretations may differ and hence the course of remedial action would differ. Perhaps we must all accept that even within NATO, member countries wish to remain in charge of their own destiny and not be dependent on vital intelligence interpretations coming from the U.S. alone.

Q: Was it not a fact that a great many of the European young scientists went to the United States for their higher graduate education?

DEAN: Yes, a lot of people came. But no one country has a monopoly on brains... The people came for graduate work to the United States because our educational system at the time was well developed and advanced, after World War II. These countries had to play catch-up ball, and sending young scientists to the U.S. was one way of doing it. Even the British turned to the U.S. universities and research centers. Before the war, Cambridge University was one of the leading centers of learning for Science and Technology. Now, many young British switch to MIT, Berkeley, or other educational centers in the U.S. This is not only true for the European countries, but for the rest of the world as well. But the NATO structure in those years was basically an American show. Perhaps, if more responsibility had been passed on in the 1960s to the Europeans, the NATO structure today, in the 21st century, would be somewhat different.

Would there be a greater willingness by the Europeans to cooperate? Anyway, in 2002, NATO underwent a major change with the association of Russia with that body.

Q: Of course, John, you are talking as a diplomat. We understand these things. But as a practical politician in the United States, it was very difficult to continue to keep American troops over in Europe. You had your friend, Mike Mansfield, that kept talking about withdrawing troops and all. One way we can toss the raw meat to a reluctant Congress is, we have control of these American troops and other troops in NATO.

DEAN: Let me put it very bluntly. We do not keep American troops overseas for other peoples' interest. It is in our own national interest to do certain things. The best example is the presence of American troops in Okinawa. We have troops in Okinawa not because the Japanese want them there, but because this happens to suit our objectives as well as certain Japanese policies. But, usually, troops and planes stationed on foreign soil are not popular with the population of the host country. A good example is the request by the German Government to the U.S. Air Force to stop overflying certain parts of Bavaria. There is nothing wrong with the United States, as the major power in the world, having stationed U.S. troops in various parts of the world for strategic global interests. I don't think we should justify all foreign bases or troop presence abroad as doing a favor to others. At best. it is a shared, common goal.

Q. I know, but it is a political battle that has been constantly waged and it's getting more and more difficult to defend. We are talking about people who really are sensitive to foreign affairs, to costs, and they ask: why not bring our boys home?

DEAN: Unless we can explain to our legislators that our troops are overseas for our own national interests, we won't get any funding from Congress very long. Our diplomats have a more difficult time convincing some

foreign governments they should permit our forces to remain in these bases despite the popular unrest to get U.S. troops withdrawn from their soil. In short, if we want to keep troops overseas, it's because we think it is in our own overall interest.

Q: This is understood, but not necessarily within our political structure.

DEAN. I agree. But the influence of Foreign Service officers on Senators, on Congressmen, is very limited. Legislators are swayed by domestic, local considerations. How do you explain to our Congress that in a changing world, the U.S. position must also change. When we started NATO in 1950, the U.S. was the all-powerful sole victor coming out of the Second World War, and we made the other members of NATO "partners". Building up our NATO allies as co-decision makers and partners has been the role of U.S. diplomacy over the last 50 years as the NATO alliance changed in character. What is wrong with having an Italian commander for the NATO Mediterranean fleet home ported in Naples? Why must it be an American admiral? If we want control over more of our ships, we send them to another port, for example Alexandria, Egypt. We put an American admiral in charge. Except it won't be a NATO fleet. There are ways of working with NATO as an organization of mutual interest to North America and the Western European countries, while at the same time keeping certain national forces outside the NATO framework.

Q: Back to 1965, when you got there, what was the situation in France regarding NATO? Were we seeing the handwriting on the wall? Were we getting ready for De Gaulle to say "Move out"?

DEAN: Our relationship with De Gaulle goes back to 1940. When De Gaulle came to power in 1944, he really did not have a lot of U.S. support. During the Second World War, De Gaulle had the support of Winston Churchill but not of Roosevelt. De Gaulle was a nationalist. At one point, during the war, Roosevelt supported General Giraud and not De Gaulle. Some Americans found De Gaulle too nationalistic and not enough of a supporter of the over-all goals of the United States during the war. As Churchill put it: De Gaulle was the heaviest cross he had to bear. The Cross of Lorraine was the emblem of the Free French. In my opinion, De Gaulle understood power probably better than most. He made his major contribution -- and it angered Americans as well at the time -- when just before the Allied landing in Normandy, the Free French parachuted people into France. When the American, Canadian, or British generals landed, these agents of De Gaulle said: "In the name of the Republic of France, I thank you for helping us liberate my country, I am the Representative of the legal French Government". During the war, we had prepared at Camp Richie in Maryland, just as we had done for Italy, a military government of occupation for France. We had printed occupation money, and prepared French-speaking officials to administer the country. When our people landed in Normandy, unlike Italy, we encountered a French Government which had taken charge and voided any need for an allied "occupation". Every move by the U.S., De Gaulle always asked himself "What does this mean for France?" I find this quite normal for a foreign Chief of State to defend his country's long-term interest. It was frustrating for others. The French – and above all De Gaulle – thought that they had a role to play in the world and they made known their views. This approach led, in 1966, to De Gaulle asking NATO to leave France, because he no longer thought it was in France's long-term interest to have foreign troops on French soil. This again changed when the European Union came of age.

Q: In 1965, how did we view the Soviet threat?

DEAN: At the time, U.S. foreign policy centered on containing Soviet expansionism. With this threat, Congress voted funds for the U.S. military establishment -- and later for stationing -- missiles on European soil.

Q: This was in the 1980s.

DEAN: The stationing of U.S. missiles came in the late 1970s. I was then Ambassador to Denmark. In 1966, the request by De Gaulle to move NATO out of France came quite suddenly and unexpectedly.

Q: Did we see any particular reason for the Soviets to attack Western Europe at that point? Obviously, this is what NATO was technically about, but did we see this as being a possibility? In talking to people over the lunch table or military people, how did they see the possibility that the Soviets might attack us? Be very frank,

DEAN: I am not an expert on Soviet policy. On NATO, I had a very narrow responsibility, preparing our delegation for POLADs meetings and the NATO Science Committee. I am certainly not qualified to discuss the question of the Soviet Union and the perceived threat, real or imaginary. All I knew was that both sides felt they had to be prepared militarily, because mutual distrust prevailed. The examples of Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and the building of the Berlin Wall, were a clear indication that the Soviet Union wanted to maintain or expand its ideology and control in Eastern Europe.

Q: In your meetings, did you get involved with delegations from other countries, or was it just the Science Delegations and that's it?

DEAN: I did not attend the POLADs meetings, just the Science Committee. It led to my assignment to the American Embassy in Paris as .the regional expert on East Asia. In 1965, Southeast Asia was one of the confrontation areas in the world. I welcomed my new assignment in Paris.

Q: So you were there from 1965...

DEAN: From 1965 to 1969.

Q: An interesting time. When you arrived in Paris in 1965, what was the political situation in France?

DEAN: Again, keep in mind that my assignment was East Asia Affairs. I was not reporting on domestic political affairs. While I was in Paris, during the 1968 upheaval, I was as much a spectator as anybody else. I was not involved in predicting it or writing about it. My main job in Paris, from 1965 to 1969, was dealing with Southeast Asia and how the French could help us in a situation they knew well. Most of my time was spent on Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

Q: President Johnson at just about that time was beginning to introduce ground troops.

DEAN: Yes. At first, we only had advisers to the Vietnamese military and civilian authorities, but we were moving towards sending American troops. We were very interested In talking with the French because they had decades of experience in dealing with the countries of Indochina. My main French contact was the Director for Asian Affairs in the Quai d'Orsay, the French Foreign Office, Etienne Manac'h. He was a most interesting person. He was far from being anti-American. He told me one day, with some sentimentality, how well he remembered when President Woodrow Wilson arrived in France in

1918 and how he, as a young boy, stood there waving a flag welcoming the American "liberator". He vividly remembered the arrival of the first American troops in France in 1917. "Lafayette, here we are". Manac'h considered himself all his life a friend of America. Born in Brittany, Manac'h remained loyal to De Gaulle and spent most of the war years as a professor at the French Lycee in Istanbul, Turkey. During my years in Paris, I went to his office every week. I was not a high ranking member of the Embassy, but he, as Chief of Asian Affairs, always received me with open arms. He even introduced me to the Foreign Minister of France, Monsieur Debré. Perhaps my ability to speak French and relay precisely what he told me was the reason for the friendly reception at the Quai d'Orsay. My lengthy reports on what Manac'h told me about Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam are still available at the State Department. France had maintained a Diplomatic Mission in Hanoï and 'the French also passed messages from the North Vietnamese to us. At this stage, the French still had a major influence in Laos and Cambodia. A few years later, Manac'h became the first Ambassador from France to Communist China. De Gaulle had confidence in him. Manac'h played a major role again at that post. Years later, when I was Ambassador to Cambodia, Manac'h transmitted my messages to Sihanouk when the Prince was living in Beijing from 1970 to 1975. Manac'h was the person who helped bring together President Giscard d'Estaing and President Ford, in December 1974, to entice Sihanouk to return to Cambodia to put an end to the war. It failed. But in the years 1965-69 we made friends in the French Foreign Office who tried to find ways to help us in the Vietnam imbroglio in which we found ourselves. We also started in Paris exchanging ideas through Manac'h with the North Vietnamese Delegation in Paris headed by Mai Van Bo.

Q. When you say you started negotiations . . .

DEAN: We had, thanks to Monsieur Manac'h, direct access to the North Vietnamese Delegation in Paris, One day, Manac'h said to me: "I would like you to meet the Editor in Chief of "L'Humanité" (this was the leading French communist newspaper). I think he can help you get some of the mail out from Hanoï written by American prisoners." I went to see the Editor of l'Humanité, Monsieur André, who was living in one of the suburbs of Paris. He had two small apartments put together into one large one. On the wall, he had magnificent Picassos. Monsieur André said: "A French journalist by the name of Madeleine Riffaut is proceeding to Hanoi. Do you want her to bring back any messages from American prisoners?" I said: "Yes, by all means it's very important that we hear from them and know what's going on at the Hanoi Hilton" (the place where our American prisoners were held). She went and came back with many letters written by American prisoners in Hanoi. These messages I was able to pass on to the families in the United States. Among them, was a tape with pictures of who is today, Senator McCain. At the time, McCain was Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy Air Corps and had been shot down over North Vietnam. He had parachuted into a lake in Hanoi, and in the landing had broken both of his arms. Among the pictures, was one of McCain holding up both arms to show his bandages. Ms. Riffaut brought back that picture and It was taken immediately to his father, Admiral McCain, who was Commander of the NATO fleet in London at the time. Manac'h facilitated these contacts. He also facilitated contacts for me. He was telling me what the Representative of North Vietnam in Paris, Mr. Mat Van Bo, was saying. (A book on his Paris days was published by him in the 1990s in Vietnamese.)

Much of what we learnt about Hanoi, before the Paris Peace Talks, came through Mr. Manac'h. Mai Van Bo was in one room, and I was in another room. Manac'h would go forth and back to find out what was the response to a specific issue. For example, in very early 1968, I came back from one of these meetings and wrote a cable saying: "I understand that the North Vietnamese are agreeable to holding talks on Vietnam in Paris". Whereupon. I received a thundering reply from Mr. Rostow "We will never go to Paris." Since in this exchange, I was just a reporter, I took Mr. Rostow's message back to Mr. Manac'h. "You tell me one thing, and look what I get back from the U.S. National Security Adviser". He said "Don't worry, it has already been decided between President Johnson and President de Gaulle that the meetings will take place in Paris."

Q: A little background. You being the contact person, obviously, this was of tremendous national interest. Who was briefing you and telling you what you could do?

DEAN: Nobody, because I was mostly a channel of communications. In the Embassy hierarchy, I was in the Political Section under the supervision of the Political Counselor Richard Funkhauser. But Ambassador Bohlen had instructed me that on specific issues, I should report directly to him.

Q: I have to mention that that was an extremely able Embassy at the time.

DEAN: The DCM was Bob McBride who later went as U.S. Ambassador to Zaire. Serving with Ambassador Bohlen was one of the great experiences of my career. One day. Ambassador Bohlen called me into his office and said: "John, we've got too many Johns around here. I am going to call you 'Josh'." From then on, I was 'Josh'.

In early 1968, it became apparent that what Monsieur Manac'h had told me about the convening in Paris of a conference to find a solution to the Vietnam conflict was about to happen. Ambassador Bohlen had near his office a "scrambler phone", that is a phone that was secure and which was used nearly exclusively by him if he had to discuss a sensitive issue with the Secretary of State. In those days, it was Dean Rusk. Ambassador Bohlen suggested that I could use it , if needed, regarding the arrangements for the Vietnam Conference. But before I ever used it, I got asked one day to come quickly to the Ambassador's office because a person in the Department of State wanted to talk to me. When I picked up the receiver, I heard a male voice saying that "Secretary Rusk wanted to speak with you". Next, I heard Dean Rusk instructing me to report back to him, by phone, when the location of the site for the conference was discussed in Paris by the French with the North Vietnamese. Shortly after that telephone conversation, I talked to Monsieur Manac'h at the French Foreign Office and said: "I understand that there is an agreement on holding a conference in Paris, but do you have any specific site in mind? Manac'h left the room and went next door where the North Vietnamese Representative. Mai Van Bo, was waiting for him. Four different sites were under consideration. They were in different parts of Paris. Among them was the old Majestic Hotel, which was the place where the Peace Talks were held. With this information in hand, I returned to the Embassy and telephoned Secretary Rusk's office. Since I was passed on directly to the Secretary of State, I was too nervous to sit down and stood up during the entire telephone conversation. I discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each site, and passed on Manach's recommendation that the Majestic Hotel site appeared to be the best location for all parties. Mai Van Bo also agreed; so the site was settled.

Then, the question arose whether there were going to be two delegations or four delegations? This was an important decision. Were the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong of South Vietnam one delegation? Were the Americans and the South Vietnamese Government one side? Or were there four separate delegations? The decision had political, legal, and practical ramifications. The seating around the table would reflect that decision. I want to give credit to a colleague of mine because it was my colleague Jack Perry, who came up with a solution of the seating at the negotiating table, which left the issue open to interpretation. He said: "You know, you ought to have one big table and just fill the whole room with that table. Also, you need separate entry doors. One group enters through one door and sits on that side of the table, the other group enters through the other door and sits on the other side of the table; this fuzzes the question whether you have two sides or four separate parties. Manac'h went himself to the French Government store-house to find a table big enough to fill the room — and the conference room had two separate doors. Since there was a little bit of space between the table and the wall, two small secretarial tables were introduced, one on each side to divide the room into two halves. In this way, clearly, there were two sides. The South Vietnamese Government sat on the same side as the Americans, and the Viet Cong sat on the side of the North Vietnamese. The bathrooms were not separate. As a matter of fact, they could be used in a way of permitting negotiators to meet discreetly to hold confidential brief exchanges.

Q: This is always a problem as we get more women into diplomacy. I can't tell you how many times I have talked about personnel assignments, issues being taken care of, during the pee break.

DEAN: The U.S. Delegation was headed by Ambassador Harriman and Secretary Vance. Phil Habib came with them as the top Foreign Service Officer.

Q: Vance was not a Secretary, was he?

DEAN: He had been Deputy Secretary of Defense before that time. The lowest man on this delegation was Richard Holbrooke. In this delegation of 13 people, Richard Holbrooke and I often were the sole dissenters. We were negotiations-oriented. Since I was in liaison with the French, I looked to the French to help us find compromises acceptable to both sides. Richard went on to have a wonderful career in the 1990s.

Q: He is today Ambassador to the United Nations. He was quite junior in 1968.

DEAN: He was the lowest man on the totem pole. When Phil Habib arrived in May 1968, he stayed in my apartment for three weeks until he got his own lodging. Phil and I became close friends. In parts, I turned over my contacts to him. He became the American contact with Mai Van Bo and Manac'h. Phil spoke good French. He was one of the best and most decent officers in the Foreign Service. In 1992, I flew over to Washington especially from France to attend the memorial service at the National Cathedral for Phil Habib.

I don't want to anticipate, but let me go back to something which was equally important. This occurred in January 1967. Robert Kennedy came to Paris and John Gunther Dean was made Control Officer for Robert Kennedy's visit.

Q: Robert Kennedy at that time was Senator from New York.

DEAN: He had been elected Senator from New York. In 1967, he was considered to be the front-runner for the Democrats in the Presidential election. My job during this visit to Paris consisted in picking him up at the airport and accompanying him in his official calls. While in Paris, he also received a tremendous amount of fan mail. He came with his friend, Bill van den Heuvel, who later served a short time as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva. As Control Officer, one of my jobs was to answer the mail for his signature. When he made official calls, I went along as his interpreter. One day, he asked to see the French Minister of Culture, Andre Malraux, who had just returned from seeing Mao Tse Tung in Beijing. We had a two-hour conversation where I was the notetaker and interpreter of that conversation. Robert Kennedy was very interested in what was going on in Beijing, what Mao Tse Tung was like, etc... They had a long conversation.

(As I had mentioned earlier, I had met Andre Malraux back in Mali, and indeed he was very gracious in remembering that event.) It took several hours to write the reporting telegram on that meeting. Then, Marshal Juin, one of the great French military leaders of the Second World War, died. His coffin was lying in state at the Invalides which is the 17th century building housing the military trophies and history of France, built under Louis XIV. Napoleon's tomb is also located there. Kennedy said: Let's go and pay our respects to Marshal Juin. Get me a wreath with the inscription "From the Kennedys". The American Embassy's administrative staff got us the wreath. With the wreath in hand, we drove to the Invalides. Indian file, we advanced to the coffin, as French soldiers lined in parade dress the path to the coffin. I carried the wreath. Kennedy was in front of me. Then, I gave the wreath to the Senator, and the Senator gave the wreath to a French military officer with whom he advanced to the coffin draped with a big French flag. The Senator put the wreath on the coffin, kneeled down, and sobbed. It was very dramatic, The television was grinding away at a mile a minute. The many spectators were stunned by the gesture of sympathy by this prominent American political leader. The Kennedys came often to France. Robert Kennedy's mother, Rose, had come to Paris nearly every year. The French public was clearly impressed by Robert Kennedy's friendly attitude toward the French people and their leaders.

As we returned to the Embassy, the Senator received a phone call from the French Foreign Office that he should come over for a meeting. At the encounter, there were four people in the room. On the French side was Mr. Manac'h, Director for Asian Affairs, On the American side, were Senator Kennedy, Bill van den Heuvel, Kennedy's friend, and Dean as the notetaker. Mr. Manac'h said that the French had received three days ago

a message from the Vietnamese which was being held for this meeting, at the request of the French Foreign Minister Michel Debré. It was what was then called the first peace signal from Hanoi. The message from Ho Chi Minh was: "If you stop the bombing of North Vietnam, we will come to the negotiating table." The date of our memorable meeting was the end of January 1967. The French Government wanted Senator Kennedy to transmit this message to the President of the United States. We are one year before any discussion about peace talks in Paris. I went back to the Embassy and realized that Senator Kennedy had been given an important message. I wrote up the conversation as a top-secret telegram. Before showing my draft to Senator Kennedy, I went back to see Monsieur Manac'h again. It was not easy to see him. He was terribly busy. I said: "Would you please read this? Is this what you told the Senator?" He said: "Yes, it's an accurate report of what I said." I showed the telegram to Senator Kennedy at 6:00 pm and he agreed to having it sent. The Senator returned the next day to Washington, and I flew to Egypt with my wife for a ten day holiday. Before leaving, the Senator wrote me a brief note; "John, if there is anything I can ever do for you -- officially or personally -- don't hesitate to let me know. Bob."

Prior to the meeting with Kennedy, I had worked with a couple of very senior American personalities, one of whom was Mr. George Ball, who was interested in contacts with the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. They had representatives in Algeria and in Egypt. I had also worked with Senator Claiborne Pell, who was the only former Foreign Service Officer in the Senate in recent times. The latter wanted to meet Mai Van Bo when Pell had come to Paris on a personal visit. This happened in 1966-1967.

In early February 1967, my wife and I went to Cairo. From there, we took a boat to Luxor. While in Luxor at the hotel, I received a phone call: "John, your name is on the front pages of the newspapers. Your telegram reporting on Senator Kennedy's meeting at which he received, via the French, the "signal" from Hanoi, is on the front page of "The New York Times". You had better get back to Paris because apparently the President is angry about the leak, and you are being blamed for the leak. You have a very good chance of being thrown out of the Foreign Service." I said: "How can I be blamed? I left Paris, went to Cairo, and I'm now in Luxor. I was not even around to leak anything." But I did fly back immediately to Paris. Fortunately, I had a fabulous Ambassador, Ambassador Chip Bohlen who was in Washington at the time. When this story broke, he defended me.

The event is also described by Schlesinger in his book on Robert Kennedy. The newspaper reported that upon his return to Washington, Robert Kennedy went to the White House to brief the President on the 'peace signal' from Hanoi. President Johnson is alleged to have accused Robert Kennedy that the State Department was particularly friendly to him. The "peace signal" in January 1967 was the beginning of the fallout between President Johnson and the potential Presidential contender, Robert Kennedy. Fortunately, Ambassador Bohlen was back in Washington on consultation and he defended me. President Johnson was quoted as saying: "Who is that fellow, John Gunther Dean? Fire him !" Ambassador Bohlen pointed out that it could not be Dean because he left Paris immediately after Kennedy's departure from Paris and he was in Egypt at the time the story broke." The leaking of the telegram reporting on the Hanoi signal was traced back to one of the Assistant Secretaries in State, and that it was done for political reasons.

But this was not the only time I was in hot waters during my duties with the U.S. Delegation to the Vietnam Peace Negotiations. One day, perhaps toward the end of 1968, in one of my conversations with Monsieur Manac'h, I asked quite innocently: "Monsieur le Directeur, why don't you help us to extricate ourselves from this situation in Vietnam?" I also alluded to my years in Indochina and the fact that the French also had been unable to cope with the Vietnamese drive for unification and Independence. Now, the U.S. was more and more involved in the quagmire. After that meeting, Monsieur Manac'h went to see the French Foreign Minister, Michel Debré, who was close to de Gaulle, and explained that Dean had suggested that the French help the U.S. to extricate themselves from the Vietnam imbroglio. Later that same evening, Cy Vance got a phone call from the French Foreign Minister to come and see him. When confronted by Debré with Dean's remarks made to Manac'h, Secretary Vance made it very clear that Dean was not authorised to put forward any ideas to the French authorities and that Dean had been speaking on his own. I laugh about this incident sometimes, and wonder whether the idea of a "brokered solution" in 1968 would not have been better than what actually happened. I continued working with Manac'h until my departure from Paris in the summer of 1969.

I would like to say a word about Manac'h's deputy, Charles Malo. He is the only French ambassador who served twice as Ambassador to China. Since we were both young at the time. we enjoyed a close professional relationship. I have seen him again after our retirement from the Foreign Service. Malo is today one of the few people alive who could bear out some of the events I cite in connection with the Peace Talks. Whenever Manac'h was not available. I met with Monsieur Malo at the Quai d'Orsay.

Q: Did you find the French critical of the U.S. getting bogged down in Vietnam?

DEAN: Not at this stage. A few years ago, I appeared on French Television. It's one of the shows devoted to the discussion of history. It's entitled "The Meaning of History". I was asked about the American involvement in Vietnam and Cambodia, and specifically whether the French did a better job in Indochina than the U.S. I replied that I did not think anybody did a better job or a worse job. Rather, the mistake was made in 1945 by all western countries, including France and the United States, who did not recognize that the time for overt political colonialism in Asia had come to an end. In 1954, Mendes France tried to extricate France from Indochina with the help of the Geneva Conference. Unfortunately, the U.S. followed in French footsteps and the U.S. also could not defeat Vietnamese nationalism and drive for unification. If anybody was wrong, I think It was the West for not seeing early enough the rise of nationalism around the world and the drive for an Asian identity.

Q: Being with this delegation that came at this time, what were you picking up from the attitude of Harriman, Vance, and Habib? What did they expect? How were things going? What did they want?

DEAN: I think most of these personalities wanted to find an honorable end to the confrontation. The military briefer every day was Colonel Paul Gorman, later four-star General, and one of the brainiest military officers I ever encountered. When I was in Vietnam in 1970, he was in charge of the 101st Airborne Division. In the course of his briefing, I would hear him say: "Our bombers hit a shipyard." Averell Harriman would Inject; "What do you mean, shipyard? A couple of guys hulling out a few tree trunks, that's what you are talking about". There was

certainly a will to work with the North Vietnamese. Both Harriman and Vance tried to find ways of meeting with the North Vietnamese, away from the limelight, in efforts to find a mutually agreeable formula. But It takes two to tango. In November 1968, delegation members and certain Embassy officials were all at breakfast at the Ambassador's residence when election results were coming in. By that time. Ambassador Bohlen had been replaced by Sergeant Shriver, President Kennedy's brother-in-law. The results showed Nixon elected and Humphrey had lost. The negotiating delegation appointed by a Democrat, President Johnson, knew that meant the end of their tenure. When Cabot Lodge arrived, I continued my liaison work with the French, but the action was between the U.S. and the Vietnamese Delegation. Although Kissinger and Le Duc Tho received the Nobel Prize for their work in Paris, the meetings did not lead to a negotiated solution. The Paris Peace Talks led to the Vietnamization of the war effort: withdrawing of U.S. troops and letting the South Vietnamese face the North by themselves. As everybody knows, the war ended with the collapse of the South Vietnamese Government some years later, and the unification of Vietnam under Hanoi control.

Q: In 1975.

DEAN: Yes, But back in the summer of 1969, I received word that I should proceed to Saigon to work in the political section, as deputy to the chief of that key section.

Q: Who was this?

DEAN: Martin Hertz, later U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria. The State Department decided to give me a year off to recharge my batteries. I said: "I will

go back to Indochina next year, if you so desire." I kept my word. Remember, I had spent 5 years in Indochina, from 1953 to 1958. Few people had served in the same area as long as I did. I had also spent four years in Paris working essentially on Indochina. I was tired and I wanted a change.

I was sent to the Center for International Affairs at Harvard, the program headed by Robert Bowie. That was to be my seventh year at Harvard.

Q: Before we talk about that. I realize you said you were a bystander on domestic French political events. What did your fellow officers at the Embassy in May and June of 1968 say about the events of that time in Paris? How were they seeing these events? What were you getting from your wife?

DEAN: Nothing from my wife. Basically, my wife has always kept out of politics. As I told you, we got to Paris in 1965. You ask about NATO and De Gaulle's decision to have NATO move out of Paris, when the unexpected request came for NATO to move out of France to another country, the Belgian Government advanced a site in southern Belgium: Bauffe-Chievre. During the First World War, my wife's grandmother's chateau had been requisitioned by the Germans. In 1940, the German Luftwaffe made the same place its western headquarters and built a runway for aircraft on the adjoining land. When in 1945 the chateau was destroyed by Allied bombing, the Belgian Government took over the land, and in 1966 offered the site to NATO. The offer was accepted.

Q: You mentioned that before, about the property having been owned by your wife's family.

DEAN: Yes. That became the NATO Headquarters. Not only in Europe, but generally, my wife stayed completely out of politics wherever we were.

Q: What was the reaction within the Embassy? First, let's think about having France kick NATO out of France,

DEAN: The Officers at the Embassy usually worked at that tine with their French counterparts. There was no anti-French feeling. We had many common goals with the French, but obviously every country has its own national interests. They do not always coincide. There was no fear or distrust of the French. We knew that De Gaulle had his agenda which might differ on certain issues with U.S. objectives. Ambassador Bohlen had been at the Yalta Conference and De Gaulle had not attended this conference where major decisions were made on the shape of post-war Europe. It was one of De Gaulle's great regrets not having been invited to that meeting. Was it Yalta or something else, De Gaulle had a tremendous respect for Ambassador Bohlen. Few people knew more about De Gaulle's relationship with Ambassador Bohlen than Robert Barrett, who was once my deputy in Lebanon years later. In 1968, he was Ambassador Bohlen's personal assistant. De Gaulle listened to Bohlen, and Bohlen listened to De Gaulle. It was two heavy-weights exchanging views. De Gaulle, who usually was quite protocol conscious, never turned down Bohlen's request for a meeting -- day or night, week-ends or Sundays. The two men understood each other. That does not mean they always agreed, but they could work together very well. Ambassador Bohlen was a consummate professional, In 1969, De Gaulle had a referendum on decentralization of the French administration. His proposal was rejected by the electorate. He resigned and died in 1970. So, Bohlen's ambassadorship corresponded to the closing days of De Gaulle's life. De Gaulle respected professionalism and be respected the role Bohlen played in the Roosevelt Administration, where he was one of the experts on the Soviet Union.

Q: Was the Embassy at all divided about the De Gaulle decision to kick NATO out? I can see this going two ways. One, the diplomats saying "Okay. fine. So be it. We 've got to deal with this." I can also see hardcore people saying "Screw this", arousing all sorts of francophobia and all that.

DEAN: Personally, I had a full plate-looking after East Asian Affairs at the Embassy. I was not involved in the reporting or analyzing of French domestic polities. The only time I was involved in domestic politics was in 1968 when there was a student uprising. Ambassador Shriver wanted to attend, as a spectator, a meeting at the French National Assembly, which he did, in the galleries. I did not think it was a good idea for the U.S. Ambassador to be seen at that point at the National Assembly, when a domestic issue was under intense debate. In my opinion, when there is a domestic political squabble, it is much better for the American Ambassador not to be perceived as being involved.

Q: Did you ever run across Vernon Walters?

DEAN: Very much so. We had different approaches to the problems of the day. but personally, we got along well. Since he was such an accomplished linguist, he was used by different American administrations for important missions. He came out of the military, rose to the rank of Major General, and then was appointed to positions at CIA and State. He worked well with his French counterparts, who had known him for many years, going back to the days he was Eisenhower's interpreter. Dick Walters (which is really what he goes by) spoke absolutely impeccable French, and many other languages. On Vietnam, he was very much of a hawk. He said: "My day will be made when we march down Main Street in Hanoi." Having said this. Dick Walters and I became good friends, although he would add: "Oh. John wants to negotiate everything. He wants to compromise. No, we have to stand our ground."

Walters and I had different politics. He is an honest, decent, committed person. When you are friends, you can hold different political views. I differed with him on many issues, I start with the assumption that your adversary today is your friend tomorrow, and vice versa. Therefore, I always want to maintain contact with as many people as possible. I don't believe in building walls around a people, which usually ends up by building up its leader. I believe that the art of diplomacy is maintaining contact and trying to resolve issues without the use of violence, if possible. For example, I fought in Vietnam in 1970-1972. Immediately after leaving Vietnam, I tried to negotiate with those who were backed by the North Vietnamese. Dick Walters has a more military approach. I had serious reservations about the use of military power in today's world to solve serious international problems. With the development -- with or without our consent -- of more and more highly sophisticated technology, it became obvious to me that more countries will have lethal weapons of mass destruction. People knew my views when I was assigned to Military Region One in Vietnam as Deputy to the Corps Commander. I went to Vietnam with the U.S. military because I strongly feel that if your country needs you, one has the duty to comply with the decision of the President.

Q: You went to Harvard for your seventh year.

DEAN: As a Fellow of the University.

Q: - From 1969 to 1970.

DEAN: That's right.

Q: What were you doing there?

DEAN: I had no specific duties. It was a year when I could catch up with what was going on in the U.S. in various disciplines of society. By 1969, I had left university 20 years earlier, and I was trying to catch up on what was new in the arts, poetry, music, economy, science... in short, society.

One day, during my year at the Center for International Affairs at Harvard, I saw a brutal attack on a colleague who was also assigned to the seminar. Navy Captain Kruger, who had been a Navy pilot in Vietnam. Some elements in the Boston area were so fiercely opposed to U.S. involvement in Vietnam, that Kruger was attacked with sticks and clubs. He was wounded and needed medical care. I was appalled that this could happen on the Harvard campus.

Q: Were these Harvard students doing it?

DEAN: I don't know whether they were Harvard students, or were rabble rousers from the outside who had infiltrated the campus, but they obviously had targeted our colleague as a symbol of U.S. military involvement in Vietnam. I was appalled by it. While you can oppose government policy, holding individuals who carry out the policy responsible and physically hurt them is despicable.

During my tour of duty in Vietnam 1970-72, I would like to say perhaps at this stage that my wife and three children stayed in Cambridge. Whenever anti-Vietnam demonstrations or vigils were held in Cambridge, my children and wife always stood by me. For example, when I left Harvard for Vietnam to serve with the U.S. military, my children said: "If my dad is involved, it can't be all bad" and they did not participate with their fellow students in demonstrations. I remain grateful to them

for having had faith in me and allowing me to do the job asked of me by our country.

At Harvard, all the participants in the program had to write a paper. I wrote my paper in 1969 on Vietnam and the need for a "negotiated solution". These words became the key in later years to my efforts to find "controlled negotiated solutions". That paper is available at Harvard, and I have a copy at home.

Q: What was your impression of how the authorities at Harvard handled the demonstrators and the situation? I was somewhat removed. As a matter of fact, I was in Saigon during the time you were at Harvard. I had the feeling that Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and some other places, did not come out very well as letting the lunatics take over the asylum.

DEAN: I would not go that far. Students, and for that matter every citizen, have the right to differ. I also have no problem with demonstrations or night vigils. It is violence that I deplore. I did have a slightly different problem, an issue which I still have not resolved in my own mind. It turns around the role of a government servant -- civilian or military -- and how to react to receiving orders with which he disagrees. Specifically, when the Secretary of State tells me, as a Foreign Service officer, that I have to go to a certain post and I disagree with the policy, what should I do? In my case, I always decided to go. The only alternative is to resign. I went from Harvard in 1970 to Vietnam. I had seen the anti-Vietnam demonstrations at home. I had been involved in the Paris negotiations on Vietnam. I ardently believed in the negotiations. I still believe today, that first and foremost, regardless who is our adversary, let us find a way of sitting down and explore whether we can find a negotiated solution. That is my profession. In my opinion, diplomacy is in part the art of trying to convince others of the mutual advantage of our policies or actions. But above all, as a Foreign Service Officer, I accept to go where the Secretary of State or the President

believes I can be of greatest service to the country. Hence, when I received orders to go to Vietnam, I went as Deputy for CORDS in Military Region One. In 1970, we had five U.S. divisions In that military region alone. Before we get into my assignment to Vietnam, I would like to express my gratitude for this year away from the "pressure cooker". I learned a lot at Harvard: how the world was changing and continues to change. Intellectual institutions look at any problem from many different points of view. There is never unanimity on any one point of view. Hence, I was willing to accept some others having a different view from mine or that of our government. Perhaps I also learned something about dissent and how to differ with my superiors. I still believe today that I owe my country the best assessment I can give, even if others disagree with my evaluation. If I differ on a policy, I believe an honest Foreign Service Officer should make it known. Silence is not an option. Personally, I did not make my career by ingratiating myself to my superiors. Many of the things I had seen and heard about in Vietnam shocked me, but I felt that, as a Foreign Service Officer, my duty was to serve the country, Just like a military officer who gets orders to go to war, I felt that if I was assigned to Vietnam to work with our military leaders, I had no choice but go - and I went in the summer of 1970. I was detailed by the Department of State to the 24th Corps in Military Region One, which was the region in the northern part of South Vietnam against the DMZ.

Q: When did you go out to Vietnam, and when did you return?

DEAN: June or July 1970, and I left Vietnam in July or August 1972.

Q: What was the situation in South Vietnam at that time when you got there?

DEAN: The South Vietnamese Government was headed by General Thieu. General Thieu had established a certain amount of political stability since the 1960s when a number of Vietnamese generals had toppled Ngo Dinh Diem and vied among themselves for power. But North Vietnam was determined to unify the country. During my period in Vietnam, the U.S. withdrew our divisions from Vietnam. We "Vietnamized" the war and left the South Vietnamese to oppose their northern countrymen. The U.S. provided the funds and weapons to the South Vietnamese military forces, as well as advisers to assist the South Vietnamese to withstand the northern drive to bring all of Vietnam under its control. We also assisted in the economic and social development of South Vietnam.

It was a privilege to work with Ambassador Bunker on the civilian side, and General Abrams and General Wyant on the military side. Ambassador Bunker's assistant was Charlie Hill. While we may not have had the same politics, we certainly had a good working relationship.

The country was governed by a group of Vietnamese dedicated to opposing militarily the expansion of North Vietnamese communism. The South Vietnamese army, navy, and air force were competent but the war had been going on for years without diminishing the will of the North to unite Vietnam under its control. In addition to the regular Vietnamese army, there were provincial forces and regional forces all over South Vietnam. These forces had American advisers. In my military region, I had 1,100 advisers. 100 of them were civilian advisers, and 1.000 were military advisers. The headquarters for Military Region One was in Danang. I moved into the house formerly used by an American admiral which was commonly referred to as the White Elephant.

Our job was to help the Vietnamese regional and provincial authorities in both military and civilian affairs. In short, I was in charge of the American advisory effort for Military Region One. But more important than our advisory effort in 1970 was the presence in our military region of five U.S. divisions. The entire U.S. effort was under the 24th Corps. The first commander of the 24th Corps in my time was a four-star Marine General, an aviator. He was followed briefly by Marine General Robinson. Then, the Army took over the Corps. Lieutenant General Sutherland was followed by Lieutenant General Dolven. My last boss was Major General Kroesen, who became a four-star General and Commander-in-chief of the U.S. Army In Europe. But by the time General Kroesen took over In late 1971, all U.S. divisions had left Vietnam and we had only an advisory function to the Vietnamese. May I add that I got to know General Kroesen very well and I think the world of this excellent soldier.

Let me say a word about my work. The position of Deputy for CORDS (Civilian Operations for Reconstruction and Development Service) to the Commander of the 24th Corps was assimilated to the rank of Major General. The person who held that position had a dedicated helicopter at his disposal. Nearly every second day of the week, DEPCORD's duty was to meet with the advisers in the field and see what was going on, and what headquarters could do to support the advisers in the field. One of the military advisers under my command was a full colonel. He was killed. He tried to land on a U.S. ship. It was he who usually briefed me in the morning, at 6:00, at my house, on what happened during the night in the military region. Our region extended from the Demarcation Line (DMZ) to the next four provinces southward, and included the city of Danang. At 7:00 a.m. was the Commanding General's briefing at the headquarters of the 24th Corps. In a U.S. military installation, about 20 minutes by car from

my house in the city of Danang. The first day I attended the Commanding General's briefing, I could not answer any questions on what had happened during the night. Thereafter, I asked one of the colonels under my command to give me a "pre-brief". I said to him: "You brief me one hour before I go to the 7:00 a.m. meeting. I don't ever want to be caught being a dummy." In the course of the 7:00 a.m. briefing, we night be told that a certain military post was overrun and the American adviser to the Vietnamese military had lost his leg, or an eye. At that point, the Commanding American General could turn to me and say: "Dean, what are you doing about it?" "Sir, I am flying up there and see whether medical help has been given, and whether I have to repatriate him or replace him. I will give you a report in the afternoon." Sometimes, it was a different kind of a problem, for example, taking care of refugees who were fleeing from violence. At one point, in 1972., Quang Tri Province, the northernmost province of South Vietnam, was completely overrun by the North Vietnamese. In the process, in April 1972. the North Vietnamese had surrounded the provincial capital where 100 American advisers were huddled together, awaiting rescue. In order to prevent our advisers being taken prisoners. I decided to fly with the helicopter dedicated to my duties to Quang Tri City and take out as many Americans as I could. I was able to take three or four trips from Danang to Quang Tri City, and every time would take seven or eight people out. On my last trip. as I was going up with American Consul Fred Brown (Frederick Z. Brown), we were shot down over Highway One, about 15 kms south of Quang Tri City. Fortunately, the rifle shot by hostile forces hit the oil line of the helicopter and not the gas line. I would not be here to relate the story because the helicopter would have exploded. Our helicopter dropped to the ground like a bag of potatoes and we hit the ground hard. We were

shook up. The helicopter could not go any further. There was a may day call, i.e. an American in distress and in need of help. Another helicopter came, under fire, to pick us up and lift us out from the spot where we had been shot down. We were taken to an installation near Hue where I asked the U.S. military whether the Vietnamese could not give us some tanks so that we could try to rescue by land the U.S. advisers for whom I was responsible. I was told that this was no longer feasible. Perhaps 24 hours later, General Hudson of the U.S. Air Force, was flown to Danang and it was from there that he organized the extraction of the remaining 50 Americans from besieged Quang Tri City. The entire operation was carried out while North Vietnamese tanks were firing into the installation. We took out not only Americans but also many South Vietnamese who had been fighting the forces from the North. The extraction by American helicopters from the beleaguered city took place at night. The pilots were so hot that they flew without clothes, except for jockey shorts. The helicopters hovered over the extraction site just long enough for the people to climb into the helicopters. There was no time to land and take off. It was also too dangerous. We got everybody out who was supposed to leave. The Vietnamese Governor of the Province and the key employees of his staff were air-lifted out to Hue.

Q: Did we have anything with which to retake Quang Tri?

DEAN: No, not at this stage. By April 1972, there were no more American military units in Vietnam. We still had aircraft which could bomb the advancing enemy and give the South Vietnamese forces an opportunity to push back the Northerners. After the fall of Quang Tri City, I was told by one of the top people in Saigon that I would not be allowed to go home until the South Vietnamese had taken back Quang Tri Province.

We did take the province back, in June 1972, and I was allowed to go home one month later.

Q: The South Vietnamese had some of their crack divisions...

DEAN: They had some excellent troops and some very good generals. They fought well on the whole. The Governor of Quang Tri was evacuated to Hué. I saw him daily and I urged him to keep his provincial administration Intact. In this way, he administered in "exile" the refugees from Quang Tri Province in Hué. Our advisers helped him by providing food, tents, and wood for cooking. Three months later, the Governor of Quang Tri was back in his province after the South Vietnamese military had retaken the province. One of the advantages I had in the 1970s was that all the Vietnamese senior military officers and civilian officials had been trained by the French and spoke rather good French. This made it easy for me to communicate with them. Most of the senior Vietnamese officers and officials were dedicated and decent. But the war had been going on for so many years that the population had become weary. The destruction was tremendous. People had been fighting since the early 1950s. Before fighting the French, there had been the Japanese occupation. Certainly, the people in the countryside were tired. The Vietnamese military had American advisers and American-supplied weapons, but the war-weariness also permeated the troops.

Not every war story relates the heroic behaviour of the valiant fighting forces. In the extraction of the surrounded Vietnamese forces and their American advisers in the Citadel of Quang Tri City, I recall the pusillanimous behaviour of an American adviser which taught me a lesson.

In Quang Tri City, in the compound in which the U.S. advisers were lodged, there remained only one air-conditioner functioning. It was April - beastly hot. That lone air-conditioner was run on a small generator and cooled down the code-room for sending messages. While all the advisers – civilian and military – regardless of rank, had to stand guard all night long, the Lt. Colonel in charge of the Advisory Unit was sleeping in the air-conditioned code-room. After the extraction, the American advisers complained about the bad example set by their leader. Shortly after the story got around, I received a phone call from the American Commander-in-Chief in Saigon. He said: "John, do you have any sons?" I replied: "Yes, I have two sons" "Would you ever want them to be serving under this lieutenant colonel?" I said: "No. This guy does not perform very well." "What are you going to do about it?" "'Well, I decided I was going to give him a bad Efficiency Rating." The Commander-in-Chief, a four-star American General, said: "John, you prefer charges against him" and he hung up. That means: have the officer court-martialed. On my staff, I had a lawyer and he drew up charges against the Lt. Colonel. The Lt. Colonel had been on the promotion list to full colonel. He was taken off the list. He was a West Pointer. His career was ended and he returned to civilian life. Under fire, the man had failed in his duties as a leader. On the whole, the American advisers were an outstanding group of able, dedicated people. But the behaviour of some of the support troops left something to be desired, especially when it came to black marketing. The advisers in the field were mostly fine soldiers and acquitted themselves with distinction.

Vietnam was a war where the American soldiers got little support from the home front. It mattered. When I came home from the Second World War on

a troop transport ship, there was a band playing at the wharf in New Jersey and young ladies with donuts and coffee came aboard to welcome the returning heroes. When I came home in 1972 from the Vietnam War, after two years and one month, there was nobody to greet you. Not only were there any festivities but nobody talked about their experiences in the Vietnam War. It was more like people wanted to forget about that chapter in our history. It took time for the folks back home to realize that the Vietnam war, like all wars, had caused hardship, wounds, and bad memories.

Q: I have to say that when I came back from Korea in 1952 or 1953, nobody was interested. You just sort of came back.

DEAN: In Korea, we had done our job and militarily it was a "draw". In Vietnam, we lost. That word, "lost", is only being used today. It was not used from 1975 until the end of the 1980s.

Let me go back to some of the outstanding work done by our American advisers to Military Region One. It also shows what CORDS , the Civil Reconstruction and Development program, was all about. Refugees by the thousands were streaming out of Quang Tri Province. They preferred fleeing to living under the communists. From Quang Tri they walked to Thua Thien Province whose capital is Hue, the imperial city of Annam. But Thua Thien was also under attack, so the refugees walked close to Danang. These refugees had nothing but their clothes on their back, or perhaps a small bundle slung on a stick over the back. The American military forces had left by that time (1972) but the neat white barracks had remained. These barracks, made of wood, were spic and span, with showers, toilets, and screens. They stood empty. So, I telephoned the American Commander-in-Chief in Saigon and said; "Sir, I intend to turn over this former American base to the Vietnamese refugees." He replied:

"John, you are in charge" and hung up. I decided that his reply was enough and I did not ask for any other opinions. I turned over the empty barracks to the refugees for lodging. Others gave them food, mostly non-governmental agencies (NGOs) from all over the world, including many American organizations. Yes, the refugees partially destroyed the barracks. As it got colder, the refugees used the wood to keep warm, and they dismantled certain buildings to obtain the wood. But I thought that the war was about people, about trying to make the refugees feel that our side cared more about people and their welfare than the other side. So, I made the decision to turn over a former U.S. military installation to the refugees coming down from Quang Tri Province. Not every military man agreed with that decision. After all, they might have preferred to turn over this facility to the Vietnamese army. I turned over another former small American installation to the refugees because they kept on coming. That installation also was partially destroyed by them.

Working with senior army flag officers helped me to learn about decision-taking. If you are the field commander, you rarely have the time to request guidance from headquarters. The decision has to be taken on the spot. The immediate situation requires action. This experience in Vietnam undoubtedly influenced me when I was faced with difficult situations in Cambodia, in Laos, in Lebanon, and in India where the tactical situation on the ground often required immediate action. In all these posts, I had to make quick decisions and my experience in Vietnam made me realize that "Time is of the essence". Take responsibility. Do it. If your superiors don't like it, they can remove you.

As I look back on my time in Vietnam during these war years, there was a sight which bothered me then, and still sticks in my mind today. Every

day, at 7:00 a.m., I had to be at the briefing of the Commander of the American military presence in MR1. A Vietnamese civilian drove me from my residence in Danang City to the headquarters of the 24th Corps. On the way to the military headquarters, I saw Vietnamese – old and young – male and female, on top of the huge mounds of leftover food from the plates of our military, searching for food, for their own consumption. They used a stick with a sharp point in their search for edible left-overs. Seeing these poor people, in the early hour mist, on top of garbage piles, with the headlights from cars bringing this picture into focus - darkness giving way to the sight of misery - made a deep impression on me. The misery caused by war is a memory I still carry with me today. One of humanity's better qualities is compassion. This experience and sentiment felt in Vietnam played a role later on in Cambodia. I found it difficult to leave the Cambodian people to a fate which I feared could be a genocide. Perhaps this sense of compassion is one of the differences between Dr. Kissinger and myself on the Cambodian tragedy. Perhaps I don't see the entire global picture as those in charge in Washington, but I do see the suffering humanity and I am affected. I am on the spot. Is that one of the differences between a field commander and his superior sitting in an office far, far away?

Q: Did you have any contact or get any feel for what was going on in Washington?

DEAN: No.

Q: Was it just a different world?

DEAN: I had very little knowledge of what was going on outside of Vietnam, except from reading the Army newspaper. I felt I had a job to do in Vietnam, and people had confidence in me. I tried to do my best. I saw

things in war which were despicable. I also saw acts of great bravery, or ordinary people just doing their job -- Vietnamese and Americans alike. Let me recite another experience which will underline the importance of good leadership. Back in 1970. when we still had American divisions in Vietnam, I was up in Quang Tri Province when I saw an American tank column coming out of an incursion from Laos. As they came out of Laos, they were surprised in Quang Tri Province by North Vietnamese troops who pursued them,. When tanks are in danger of being captured, the soldiers get out of the tanks and run toward friendly lines in the hope of saving their lives. I happened to have been there, standing in back of the American Brigadier General speaking to American troops, when they arrived in a safe area. He said: "Men, you go back and get these tanks. These tanks are going to turn against us. We can't afford to have our tanks in the hands of our enemy. Go and get them !" The answer of the troops was: "General, up yours I Go and get them yourself !" The man was relieved of his command. What he should have done was: "Men, follow me. I am going to lead you. We've got to get our tanks back. We can't let the enemy take over these tanks in good condition and use them against us. Follow me, men ! " I have tried to apply this lesson in my role as leader of a team: Lead by setting a good example.

Q: Did you find at this point of the war that the American military, particularly at the troop level, was beginning to not disintegrate, but there were a whole series of things, including...

DEAN: You did have fragging. I was aware of that.

Q: You might explain what fragging is.

DEAN: Fragging is throwing a grenade from the rear, usually against an

officer who is disliked by the troops. It's using explosives to eliminate a member of your own team. What I noticed in Military Region One was that most soldiers were counting the days until their tour of duty would come to an end. The average American soldier in a fox-hole was alone with his buddy in an isolated advanced position, and he acquitted himself with valor and a sense of duty. They were in my mind great guys. I also had under my command young Foreign Service Officers on their first tour of duty, assigned to some out of the way district in Thua Thien Province, or in the hills of Quang Nam Province, etc... Many a night, these distant, isolated districts came under attack by the North Vietnamese or the Viet Cong. How many of these young men, assigned to help in rural development, education, and hygiene, came under attack at night? Was this the kind of duty they expected when they had entered the U.S. Foreign Service? I have the greatest respect for these young FSOs at the time. They learned about leadership, how to set an example. Some of them are today ambassadors. They did not sign up for that kind of hazardous duty in Vietnam. Nonetheless, the Foreign Service officers assigned to CORDS in Vietnam carried out duties far removed from what is generally associated with traditional diplomacy. When I had to fly to some distant field hospital and decorate an adviser who had lost an eye or a limb, I understood the meaning of "duty" and "service to your country".

I liked the Vietnamese people and I had a good relationship with their leadership. The South Vietnamese were beginning to worry - "Are we being seen as the stalking horse of the Americans? "Are the North Vietnamese painting us South Vietnamese, as collaborators?" I still wear today, with some pride, cufflinks given to me by General Thieu when I finished my tour of duty in Vietnam. I was asked by Ambassador Bunker to go to the Presidential Palace in Saigon, and I was awarded a

number of Vietnamese medals for my service in Vietnam.

Another realization I gained during my years with the military in Vietnam was that war hurts mostly civilians. I also gained the impression that most American generals don't engage troops lightly and prefer a negotiated solution to war. Senior military officers know what it means to ask soldiers to risk their lives. Politicians very often don't take sufficiently into account the results of violence and war, both on our soldiers and on the civilians of our enemy. The experiences I gained in Vietnam were very useful for me in the positions which I was about to receive for the next 20 years.

Q: In Vietnam, who was the head military commander while you were there?

DEAN: General Abrams. Years later, I went to his funeral in Washington. He was an excellent chief, indeed. Once a month, the top brass, including the 4 Depcords, assembled in Saigon to be briefed and to exchange views on what was going on in the four military regions. General Abrams presided. On occasion, he could be very outspoken with those who may have made a mistake, even with other top generals under his command. General Abrams was also a very private person. Sometimes, late at night, he would listen to classical music. He was one of the best.

He was replaced by Freddy Wyant. His style was different. He was less aloof than Abrams. We got to be friends and stayed in touch for many years. He was in charge when the Quang Tri invasion occurred and we worked together closely during that period. He came often to Military Region One and he was still in charge when South Vietnamese troops retook Quang Tri Province in July 1972. I learned from General Wyant that when

you are in charge, that means you must take the decision and you are held responsible for the result. Often, he would say: "Don't come to me for advice. I have confidence in you. Do what is necessary." That style of leadership helped me to do what I-did later in Laos. Not everybody appreciated that kind of leadership. I remember, I was reprimanded in Laos by the Secretary of State for answering the Prime Minister's question when he asked for advice, for not referring the question back to Washington. I assume that Washington was afraid that I might give advice which was not "politically correct". We will discuss it in our discussion on Laos.

Q: I would like to know a little more how you operated. You are saying the young Foreign Service officers were performing well -- the Foreign Service officers assigned to CORDS.

DEAN: Very well.

Q: I assume that you flew by helicopter to the outlying districts where the young FSOs were stationed?

DEAN: Yes. We only had advisers -- civilian and military -- in regions under South Vietnamese Government control. Certain areas in South Vietnam were written off to the Viet Cong and obviously there were no South Vietnamese Government presence there, nor American advisers.

Q: Basically though, it was really the North Vietnamese who controlled areas in MR1 not under South Vietnamese Government control, wasn't it?

DEAN: Whether you call them North Vietnamese or Viet Cong does not really matter. There was some support in the outlying districts for Hanoi's struggle to unite Vietnam, for nationalism and for ending fighting which had lasted for a couple of decades. Our FSO advisers tried to help the

districts to improve the conditions of life of the poor farmers. For example, young officers in a small district or in a small town would say: " I am going to get you some seeds to grow some corn." Or they might say: "I can get you some lumber so that you can repair your house." Or "We will get you some pigs to diversify your farming." They might have a literacy program, I recall that during my tenure in MR1, CORDS helped to keep functioning the University of Hue. After the 1968 debacle in Hue, we helped the Vietnamese rector and professors to reopen the university. Final examinations were being given at Hué University during the fall of Quang Tri Province, in 1972. The graduation of a new group of civilians students was essential to the future of Central Vietnam. Our CORDS advisers helped the university teachers to supervise the exams, provide security, and make the university function. We received an award of gratitude from the University for our assistance.

Q: You spent quite a bit of time flying out and talking with the senior officials of the region.

DEAN: A great deal. I visited regularly the 4 provinces under CORDS control. I also worked closely with the major urban centers. Danang was a relatively important port and the hub of Central Vietnam. During my tenure in Central Vietnam, I received an instruction from Washington to protect the famous Cham Museum, The message said that President Nixon had received a request from Phillip Stern, curator of the Guimet Museum in Paris, asking the U.S. to ascertain that the Cham Museum in Danang would not be destroyed nor damaged, as the museum in Hué was in 1968. With the U.S. advisers to the Mayor of Danang, I went to look at the Cham Museum.. I learned that the museum was entirely dedicated to the preservation of Cham art. The Chams were carriers of Hindu influence which is reflected in their sculptures and their temples. Their art is

similar to the sculptures at Borobudur in Indonesia. Cham temples can still be seen in Central and South Vietnam. The Danang Cham Museum is an open air structure - the building has a roof, but is open on at least one side. Every item in the museum is locked into a wall with a steel rod. Hence, with metal rods, the art pieces could not be stolen. This museum survived entirely intact. I asked the mayor to send a military detachment to the museum to protect it from greedy traders cutting off heads of the sculptures for resale abroad. A group of soldiers was assigned to guard the Cham Museum in Danang. Today, that museum is one of the great tourist attraction of Vietnam. It is certainly the most outstanding museum of that particular art form in the world. In 1999, the French published a guide book with reproductions of each artifact in the Cham Museum and offered thousands of volumes to the Danang Museum to be sold to tourists. In the foreword, there is specific mention of President Nixon's Instruction to the American authorities to help protect this unique museum.

Q: At the Danang level, how did you find dealing with the Vietnamese Commander? Was General Lon still there? I have heard from other people that General Lon was more a political general and had large warehouses full of his stuff. In other words, a lot of corruption there. Did you find this?

DEAN: I am quite sure that there were abuses. As for the general you mention, I was in Vietnam to help the South Vietnamese to withstand North Vietnamese efforts to topple the Saigon regime. I tried to understand and work with South Vietnamese civilian and military officials. They had mostly been French-trained and spoke fluent French. They came from a rather privileged class of people. Their wives sometimes used the position of their husbands to increase their material well-being. Some generals were less action-oriented than others. Some of the senior military officials also had second thoughts about how they were perceived by their own people so as not to be seen as "puppets of Americans".

We could at times be quite heavy-handed by wanting to run the show by ourselves. This tendency obviously changed after the American military units had left Vietnam. Perhaps the general you referred to was a more cautious person. The general In charge of Thua Thien was a very scrappy general who led his troops himself. Some Vietnamese military In 1972 were also asking themselves If perhaps this war was not going to lead to a victory, would the Americans stand by them In time of difficulty? It's easy to say "He did not fight hard enough", especially If he is sitting In a very comfortable easy chair in Danang or in Saigon. I once received a book which was dedicated to me with the words "We manned the walls of freedom together". Yes, I was in the front lines on the ground, having my windows shot out, some times being physically targeted by the adversary. The man who dedicated this book to me was sitting in a comfortable office back home, thousands of miles away from the military confrontation. I am sure he worried a great deal, but It is not the same when you are In the field facing physical danger. You asked about General Lon and the Vietnamese generals. Some were good generals. Some may have had sticky fingers. But we had our own problems among American soldiers. Let me cite the example of my own orderly. Three out of four of my orderlies were punished for abuse of my commissary privileges. I cannot change others, but I tried to be a worthy representative of the United States. Setting a good example was more Important to me than pointing fingers at others.

Q: Were we concerned about the generals - the reputation was there of General Lon, who was spending more time aggrandizing his personal fortune than leading... Was that a concern?

DEAN: Definitely. It was also a concern later on in Cambodia, trying to shore up the military to do the fighting. But as time went on -- and

that is the difference between being a field commander and being a political observer – you see it differently when you are on the ground than when you are back in Washington looking at the global picture and wonder how it fits into the relationship with the Soviet Union or with China. Colonel Jacobson, who was the Deputy Head of CORDS, was a legend. He was a tough, likeable colonel who thought our mission was to have South Vietnam win. I came to CORDS with a reputation of being a negotiator. If I could have negotiated, I would have negotiated. But I could not. I was merely a small cog in a big wheel. But I always asked myself – and that was going to be a leitmotif in different periods of my life -- on whose side is time. I fear that some policy makers misread that terribly. All I can say, I had great respect for all those who carried out their duty with candor, strength and determination. There were abuses, yes. There were abuses by Vietnamese and perhaps also by some Americans, but that is focusing on the warts.

Q: I am trying to touch various elements, including the overall picture and the warts.

DEAN: The overall picture was that in 1972 you could see a certain battle fatigue setting in both in the United States where the war demonstrators got more vocal, where people in Congress were beginning to criticize our policy as for example Senators Church and Kennedy, and in Vietnam where some elements were beginning to question whether President Thieu could withstand Hanoi's efforts to take over the whole country.

Before leaving the subject of Vietnam, I would like to say a word about a great American: Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker. He was a fine human being, a great patriot, who saw the picture accurately. He was not afraid to

criticize our military on "body count". He was not afraid to send candid messages to Washington in which he set forth his doubts about certain policies. Would we be loyal to our friends and allies to the end? I thought Ambassador Bunker, who came up to Danang quite often, was a loyal supporter of our policy, although he probably saw problems ahead. Ambassador Bunker knew whatever he was doing was for his country and not for his own glory.

Q: How did you work with the Political Section in Saigon? They would send their gallopers out to...

DEAN: I had very little contact; practically none with the Political Section in Saigon. We had a Consulate in Danang and that was its function.

Q: I was going to ask about the Consulate. Who were Consuls when you were there?

DEAN: I knew two. Fred Z. Brown and Terry McNamara. I had a perfectly good relationship, but their role was largely as observers for Embassy Saigon. CORDS officers were supposed to be doers. As I said earlier, Fred Z. Brown was in my helicopter when we both got shot down. Terry McNamara was a brave officer who later went on to become Depcords in Military Region Four where he made a name for himself.

Q: Did you ever run across John Paul Van?

DEAN: I worked with him. I also went to his funeral. I knew his girlfriend very well.

Q: Which one?

DEAN: who was there when he died.

Q: Were you...

DEAN: I saw him regularly once a month at the briefing session in Saigon. He was a strong personality, a military man with strong convictions about our role in Vietnam. He was in Two Corps, which was a particularly difficult region because most of the Hill Tribes lived in that area. Keeping the Hill Tribes from supporting the North Vietnamese and have them handled in a way that they would support the government in Saigon was a challenging task. John Paul Van was certainly the most recognized personality in the CORDS program by the media for his outstanding service.

Q: Were the Koreans gone by the time you left?

DEAN: No. We had Koreans, but they were not in I-CORPS. We had two Australian advisers who received the Victoria Medal in our region. That was prior to my arrival in Vietnam.

Q: I think this is a good place to stop for today. We will pick it up next time with where you went in 1972.

DEAN: In 1972, I was asked to be Deputy Chief of Mission of the largest Mission at the time in the U.S. Foreign Service: Laos. I had the honor and privilege to work with Mac Godley, one of the "field marshals" who enjoyed his position of great power and making military decisions. When Mac asked me "John, what do you take, the war or peace?" I said: "I think I am better qualified for peace". It was in Laos that I was able to achieve a peaceful solution to a war.

Q: All right. We will pick this up then.

Q: Today is September 9, 2000. One question I meant to ask about your time up in I-CORPS. Did you have much to do with the "Montagnards", the hill people there, and how did they fit into the equation?

DEAN: The answer is. Military Region One did not have many Montagnards. They were in Military Region Two and Three, John Paul Van really had the Montagnards problem. It was in that area that he did some of his best work. We did have some Cham temples west of Thua Thien, but that area was at that time already Viet Cong territory.

Q: Didn't you have some resettlement from...

DEAN: The people from Hue were resettled. They were obviously Vietnamese.

Q: A friend of mine, Fred Elfers, was in I-CORPS. He took me up and showed me a fishing village where they had taken people from the interior to settle as refugees along the coast.

DEAN: We did have refugees because of the fighting, but they were not, on the whole, the minority tribes. Hill Tribes in Vietnam were racially completely different from the Vietnamese.

Q: "Vietnam" means "Southern Viets" doesn't it?

DEAN: That's right. By the way. South Vietnam, formerly known as Cochinchina, was taken over by the Vietnamese from the Cambodians. When we supported Marshal Long Nol's government in Cambodia, we helped raise a whole division in South Vietnam of ethnically Cambodian people to fight for Cambodia. The Vietnamese moving south from Tonkin only reached the tip of South Vietnam about the year 1800.

Q: Let's move on to Laos.

DEAN: When I arrived in Laos in the autumn of 1972, I had a long conversation with Ambassador MacGodley. By that time, I had the reputation of being a "fighter". Embassy/Vientiane was a huge Mission of 680 Americans. Mac Godley was a person who inspired loyalty. He, in turn, reciprocated with full support for his staff. He believed in the doctrine that we should put as much military pressure as possible on the Pathet Lao and their Vietnamese supporters, especially through aerial bombing. In the course of this meeting, Mac asked me: "Do you wish to take the war or peace?" I took the peace. Had I opted for "the war", it would have meant selecting targets, for bombing by American planes, and supporting the CIA efforts with the Meo mercenaries fighting the Vietnamese. There was a whole section in Embassy/Vientiane that was involved in selecting targets for bombings by the U.S. Air Force. Bombing helped to push Pathet Lao troops off a hilltop or giving support to the Royal Lao Army units facing the enemy. We had a very close relationship with the Lao military. When I arrived in Vientiane in 1972, a Pathet Lao delegation had just arrived in town to explore the possibility of negotiations. So, when I took over the role of following, for the Embassy, efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Lao conflict, I was lucky, as far as timing was concerned.

Q: Excuse me. You were there from 1972 to when?

DEAN: Until October/November 1973. One of the reasons the Pathet Lao delegation had arrived in Vientiane was that the leader of the Pathet Lao was Souphana Vong, who was the half brother of Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma, who was very much committed to finding a way of ending the armed conflict. The presence of Souvanna Phouma as Head of the Royal Lao Government was probably the reason that we were able to help find a negotiated solution in Laos. In Cambodia, unlike Laos, there was no

major local personality in the country with whom you could negotiate or who was a credible neutralist leader. Souvanna Phouma was known as a neutralist, and proud to be one. In an earlier Interview, I had discussed the personal links I had with him. Since I came back to Vientiane, this time as Deputy Chief of Mission, my wife and I were invited quite often in the evening to the Prime Minister's home. Dinner was usually followed by bridge. Souvanna Phouma was an avid bridge player and he liked to win. If by 11:00 p.m. he had won, we went home at 11:15. But if Souvanna Phouma was losing, we stayed on until 1:00 a.m., until he started winning. These social occasions gave me an opportunity of discussing in a leisurely manner the problems of the day. Since Souvanna Phouma was an avowed neutralist, he did not really enjoy the enthusiastic support of the United States. Most of the time, Souvanna Phouma was interested in exploring solutions which saved face for both Lao parties.

Q: In 1961 or 1962, what had been the solution at that point?

DEAN: Back in those days, Mr. Harriman worked with the neutralist General Phoumi Nong Savan. Back in 1962, Lao neutralists were more acceptable to the U.S. You must remember. Secretary Dulles was no longer on the scene. Certainly, by 1972, Souvanna Phouma had emerged as a compromise figure on the Lao political scene. The French gave him full support. I am also inclined to believe that the Russians supported the coming of the Pathet Lao to Vientiane in order to find an alternative to the war. The Pathet Lao official who was sent to Vientiane as Head of the Delegation was Phoumi Vong Vichit who later became President of Laos.

A word about the other important players on the Lao side, in this crucial period. One of them was the King of Laos. You may remember that he had

gone to school with my late Father-in-law, when the former was the Crown Prince. When we went to Luang Prabang, this made some difference in my relationship with him. The King was a mild-mannered person, while his son, the Crown Prince, was prone to act at times high handedly. Both the Lao Dynasty in Luang Prabang and the Princes of Champasak in Southern Laos had links, not only to France, but also to Thailand. In Southern Laos, Prince Boon Oum had fought the Japanese during the Second World War, and after the war served briefly as Prime Minister of Laos. Prince Boon Oum, a huge man, was basically a country gentleman, not terribly well educated, but he loved the good things in life: booze, beautiful women, and having a good time. I had been told that when he came to Paris as Prime Minister, he was supposed to meet with the President of France. On his way to the meeting, he had met a nice-looking floozie so he just forgot about his appointment with the President of France. His nephew Sisouk Champasak played an important role in Laos in the 1960s and 1970s, and was quite pro-American.

Q: When you say "we", I assume your wife was with you.

DEAN: Oh yes. She always played a very major role. Her family was known to Souvanna Phouma. By 1972, his children were grown up. One was in the military. Another was in business. His very attractive daughter, Moun, had attended prestigious schools in France. Later, she married an American. Perry Stieglitz, who was in the U.S. Embassy. She was a very refined, beautiful lady. She also had a sister who worked with NGOs.

General Kouprasith was the Head of the Royal Lao Armed Forces. Among his accomplishments, is the building of the Arch of Triumph in Vientiane, which every tourist visits today. He was the son of the Head of the King's

Council, the senior position of the Lao civilian administration. He had spent many years In school in France. By the time I returned to Laos in 1972, he was an old man. But with that family we also had close links going back to earlier years. We had spent tine with them at their family hone in southern Laos. Nearly all Lao officials spoke French, in addition to their native Lao language which is very close to the Thai language. If we wanted to communicate with the key Lao personalities -- civilian or military -- it was essential in those days to be able to speak French. Ambassador Godley spoke good French, and most of the Embassy staff spoke French. We also had a few Thai-speaking officers.

On the American side. I would like to single out Jack Vessey. He was a Brigadier General at the time. He was in charge of providing our Mission with military support, out of Udorn in northern Thailand. This entailed providing military hardware and military intelligence to the Royal Lao forces. Jack and I became good friends. On a number of occasions, we traveled together in his plane, visiting the Royal Lao Armed Forces or the Meo Hill Tribes fighting the Vietnamese who were supported by the Central Intelligence Agency. One day. Jack and I were on the Plaine des Jarres, in northeastern Laos, when suddenly we came under intense artillery shelling from the Pathet Lao, supported by the North Vietnamese. The artillery shelling was pretty precise. Jack Vessey and I were forced to lock arms and jump together into a ditch to avoid being hit by enemy artillery shelling. Jack was a very thoughtful person. In the hours we spent in his plane traveling, we would discuss the role of the United States in Indochina, in Asia, and In the world. Among the many American military I had the honor of working with. Jack was tops. Later, he served with distinction as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

It was In 1971 that I started working closely with Peng Pongsavan who was the President of the Lao National Assembly. He had been selected by the King and by Souvanna Phouma to be the negotiator for the Royal Lao Government side. On the Pathet Lao side, was Phoumi Vang Vichit. The two Lao delegations met during the daytime and tried to find compromises to their opposing views. In the evenings, usually after 10:00 p.m., I went over to see Peng Pongsavan to obtain a read-out on the status of the negotiations. Armed with many notes, I returned to the Embassy to send a detailed message to our National Security Advisor on the status of the negotiations to find an end to the Lao conflict. My message was not sent always through the State Department channels, but directly to the White House. i.e., the Security Adviser.

Q: This would be Henry Kissinger at this point.

DEAN: You are right. That was Henry Kissinger. He came to Laos quite often as part of his trips to Vietnam. In Vientiane, I would act as his interpreter. Although Dr. Kissinger speaks good French, he preferred to speak in English and I would interpret. Vice-versa, when Souvanna Phouma spoke, he would ask for a translation. This way, both men had time to prepare their replies.

Q: At this time, when you were hearing this, how did we feel about the outcome of this? We were saying "This is not acceptable" or were we willing to sit back and say...

DEAN: I received practically no guidance from Washington and I was very much on my own. It should also be noted that in March 1973 Ambassador Godley had left post for a new assignment and I was left in charge for the next 6 months. Souvanna Phouma's neutralism was not our preferred solution.

Yet, Washington was eager to receive a read out on the status of the negotiations. Often, Peng Pongsavan, the Royal Lao Government negotiator, would ask: "What do you think about this compromise or that approach?" I did not have time to ask the Department for guidance. I would give my opinion, suggesting: "Maybe this approach might work." In a way, I was part of the negotiation by extension and the faith Peng Pongsavan had, that I reflected the official view of Washington. Sometimes, Peng Pongsavan would ask: "Do you think this is acceptable?" (presumably to Washington). I would say: "If it leads to a settlement, yes." We both knew that the outcome of the negotiation would have to be a coalition government. That means sharing power with the Pathet Lao. By 1972, Laos was no longer perceived by Washington as a bi-lateral problem but rather as part of a much broader U.S. effort to contain the spread of communism in South-East Asia, and that entailed all 3 former Indochina states of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Q: The Soviets were involved.

DEAN: The Soviets had been involved in Laos for some time. You will recall that Governor Harriman had fortunately found a solution supporting the neutralists in the early 1960s, with General Phoumi Pongsavan. In 1972 - 1973, the Soviet Ambassador to Laos was definitely in favour of a compromise solution for Laos. That basically meant supporting a denouement to the conflict by the formation of a coalition government with the Pathet Lao. In my nightly reporting, I had the help of a very dedicated Foreign Service secretary who would come to the office at midnight in order to type up the message to Washington. Before that, Dick Howland, an excellent FSO who later became ambassador, was my political chief and he was also at the office in the middle of the night to ensure that the message was perfect.

Q: Dick has almost a photographic memory. He knows all the Lao names.

DEAN: Dick would come in and be sure that what I had drafted was coherent and I had used the right words. He was an excellent wordsmith. Again, I would like to state that all chiefs stand on the shoulders of their team.

Q: Using the military terms, the wiring diagram gets rather important - who reports to whom. Here you are, a Foreign Service Officer. I can see sending something to the National Security Adviser, but we did have a Secretary of State and the whole thing there. This was the main focus of our foreign policy at the time in Indochina. Where did you get your orders from to do it this way, and how did this work?

DEAN: Basically, I got answers to my reports from the National Security Adviser, Dr. Kissinger. He came from time to time to Vientiane, on his way to Vietnam. It was quite clear that I was expected to address my messages to the National Security Adviser. On my staff of 680 Americans, more than half were involved either in support of the Meo Hill Tribes fighting the communists, or different American Intelligence Agencies gathering information to support our effort to oppose the spreading of communism. In addition to a number of CIA officers, we also had at our post Army Intelligence, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the Drug Enforcement Agency. In Washington, the only place where all this information was coordinated was in the Office of the National Security Adviser. At the post, the coordinator was the Ambassador, or in his absence, the Chargé d'Affaires,

One day. something happened which was written up in detail in "Time Magazine", "Newsweek", and the international press. My nice boss. Ambassador Mac Godley, was asked in February 1973 to become Assistant Secretary of State for Asian Affairs, in Washington. This was an important job where he was also going to be in charge of the Indochina problem. It was also a vote

to keep on fighting and continue aerial bombing as an essential part in using military pressure to find a solution.

Q: The bombing was basically against the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

DEAN: Not always. The bombing could be in the Plaine des Jarres which had nothing to do with the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The American bombing was often directed against a hilltop where the Pathet Lao had displaced the Royal Lao Government Forces. The idea was to get them off the hill and have the friendly forces retake the hill. This was also a time when some vocal reservations were expressed in Congress about bombing. Some Congressmen even urged stopping the air operations altogether. Back in Washington, MacGodley's designation as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs ran into difficulties in the Senate. Instead of being confirmed for the Washington assignment, his name was proposed for the Ambassadorship to Lebanon. With Godley's departure from Vientiane in early 1973, I became Chargé d'Affaires, a position I held for 6 months, until a new ambassador arrived at post.

The official orders we had at that time were clear: support the government of Souvanna Phouma. We supported the Royal Lao Government, and I followed these instructions scrupulously. Souvanna Phouma and this policy were going to be put to a test. In August 1973, General Tao Ma, a Lao dissident Air Force General, sneaked across the Mekong River and occupied the Vientiane Airport. He was supported by a group of dissident Lao military officers who had come from northern Thailand in an effort to topple the neutralist government of Souvanna Phouma. That group of coup plotters undoubtedly had the support of some branches of the U.S. Government and also perhaps the support of Asian countries which opposed the neutralist

policies of Prince Souvanna Phouma. After they had also taken control of the Vientiane Radio Station, they went on the air to alert the public that their mission was to evict Souvanna Phouma from power. They took full control of the Vientiane Airport and control tower, and wanted to use the small American-supplied military planes given to the Royal Lao Air Force, to subdue the Souvanna Phouma Government and force the Royal Lao Government to turn over the government to them.

When I was notified of this development, I first found a safe house for Souvanna Phouma, and he was out of harm's way. I then had my driver take me to the Airport to confront the coup plotters. I then tried to organize Americans to help me to put down the coup, but all of them saw their role as reporters or observers. My staff was very generous in writing up the events. One of them was Frank Franco who was in charge of fire security at the airport. Colonel Bailey, the Military Attaché, was equally active in keeping abreast of developments, but was reluctant to be directly involved in defending the Prime Minister or putting down the illegal coup d' état hatched outside Laos.

Q: What was Frank Franco's position?

DEAN: He was involved with the airport.

Q: Was he in the CIA?

DEAN; I don't know. I think he was on the AID payroll. All I can say is that he was a very hard working and a very devoted person who took the time to write an 18-page report on the coup attempt. It said exactly what happened. I felt pretty much alone in crushing the coup.

When we arrived by car at the airport, I got a bull-horn and, standing below the Airport Control Tower, I shouted in French to the coup plotters: "Go back across the Mekong. If you are not going to go back, I'm going to cut off the gasoline supplies and all other items needed by the Lao military and provided by the U.S. Get out of here! My job is to support the Government of Prince Souvanna Phouma and this coup is against this government. I will not have you undermine the legal and internationally recognized Lao Government !" Nobody moved, except some plotters who were getting the small military propeller-powered planes ready to fly over the city and take over the government. So, I asked my driver to drive the car to the middle of the runway in order to block the planes from taking off. I sat in the car with my chauffeur. The latter was shivering with fear He wanted to get out. I said: "You stay here. I am staying in the car with you. Put the flags on the car." The two flags (the American flag and the Presidential flag) were flying on the car and we were blocking the runway. Well, General Tao Ma was not going to be put off by this show of bravado by a young civilian officer. He fired up his plane and he tried to take off. Since I was about midway on the airstrip, he tried to avoid the car. He did not have enough height. In the process of avoiding a collision with my car, he veered off to the right and crashed. He was killed instantly. I must admit that at that point, I was also a little shaky myself. So, I told the driver: "Let's go back to the Control Tower." There, I took my bull-horn again and shouted: "Get your buts back over the Mekong River ! This thing is over !" At that point, there was a Royal Lao Army detachment waiting near the airport for the outcome of this confrontation. Sisouk Na Champasak, the Lao Minister of Defense, and a good friend, was heading the troops, but he was still waiting to see how this struggle was going to end. Was it going to be neutralist Souvanna Phouma or hard liners? At that point, a putschist colonel, second in command to General Tao Ma, took off by plane and left for across the Mekong River. The rest of the

coup plotters followed by boat. Finally, seeing the failure of the coup plotters, the Royal Lao military detachment decided to move and take control of the airport. The coup was over!

Q: They went where?

DEAN: They went back to Thailand. This was the last attempt to stop the negotiations for a coalition government which would bring the Pathet Lao out of the bush and into the Royal Lao Government.

Q: You are talking about Royal Lao Forces in Thailand. They came across the Mekong.

DEAN: But these were rebellious officers who had taken refuge in Thailand.

Q: Had they been sitting in Thailand? You mentioned that maybe there was some tacit support within the U.S. Government for this.

DEAN: There was a major U.S. support operation in Udorn, in northeastern Thailand to assist the Royal Lao Armed Forces and the Royal Government. I think enough books have been written about it. General Tao Ma was an officer in rebellion against the political leadership of Prince Souvanna Phouma. He and his coup plotters could not have undertaken this entire operation unless they had support from other well organized foreign groups. There is no doubt that there existed at the time elements on the American and Thai sides who opposed the neutralist policies of Souvanna Phouma. My instructions were very clear; to support the government of Souvanna Phouma. I was there to carry out that policy. I did not have time to ask for guidance from Washington or from anybody else. In any case, had the coup plotters succeeded in their takeover, there would have been elements in the U.S. who would have blamed me for failing to support

Souvanna Phouma, and others for trying to stop the plotters from doing what was needed to stop Laos' sliding toward communism. I thought I was carrying out the official U.S. policy and I threw my own life in the balance to achieve our objective. Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma was now free to continue his efforts to bring the war to an end through negotiations. My superiors in Washington were generous in praising my actions. There were undoubtedly factions back home who regretted that the coup had failed.

While most of the action centered around the airport, I also had to think about the safety of the Pathet Lao delegation who had come to Vientiane for the negotiations and who lived in a large house in town. Knowing that these Pathet Lao negotiators were very much a target of the coup plotters, I asked some of the American Marines guarding our Embassy to send a few marines to the Pathet Lao house to protect them against those who wanted to harm them. After General Tao Ma was dead and after all coup participants had fled across the border, I went over to the Pathet Lao Delegation where its chief negotiator, Phoumi Vong Vichit, thanked me for the protection. The Pathet Lao Delegation members and their American protectors all joined in a glass of sparkling wine, the closest thing to Champagne, to celebrate the success of our intervention. The road for a negotiated solution was free. The Pathet Lao Delegation members understood that their lives had been In the balance if this coup had succeeded.

At that point, we continued working with the two negotiators, Peng Pongsavan for the Royal Lao Government, and Phoumi Vong Vichit for the Pathet Lao. They signed the famous Protocol which opened the door to a coalition government a few weeks after the aborted coup. On October 18, 1973, I received a personal, signed, letter from the President of the United States

which reads as follows
:

"Dear John,

You have my warm congratulations and my sincere thanks for the outstanding contribution you made to this successful completion of the Lao Protocol which was signed on September 14. You are far more than an observer and a reporter of the events leading up to the agreement. You also played a vital role as mediator and catalyst earning the respect and admiration of all the parties. You vigorously and skillfully represented the United States and thus helped fulfill the earnest desire of the American people to advance the cause of peace for the people of Indochina and the world.

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon"

We never broke relations with Laos after 1975 when we left Vietnam and Cambodia. Christian Chapman was then in charge of our Embassy in Vientiane and he and Charlie Whithouse knew how to build on what we had accomplished.

Q: I have an interview with him.

DEAN: Christian Chapman and Ambassador Whithouse did an excellent job in honing our links with Laos. We never broke diplomatic relations with Laos, even during and after the withdrawal of all American presence from Vietnam and Cambodia in 1975. There was no genocide in Laos. Unlike Vietnam and Cambodia, there was no mass killings in Laos. A few people went to "reeducation camps" after 1975. Others fled to Thailand or the U.S., or France. A coalition government was formed in the autumn of 1973, Then my very good friend Ambassador Charles Whithouse took charge of the American Embassy. The new Lao Government included Pathet Lao and Royal Government ministers under the leadership of Souvanna Phouma.

One day, Souvanna Phouma called at his home a meeting of all the ambassadors and chiefs of mission in Vientiane. At that occasion, he publicly thanked me for the constructive role I had played in helping to bring about a peaceful negotiated solution to a long conflict between the Royal Government of Laos and the Pathet Lao. In my long career which was to follow, it was one of the great moments in my life, having been instrumental in helping people find a controlled, negotiated solution rather than continuing military confrontation where I felt then and later, time was not on our side. This particular aspect of time is repeated in many messages which came out of Vientiane. Let me give you an example of some of the anecdotes. At one point as we were very close to a conclusion in a negotiated solution, the Pathet Lao had pushed the Royal Government off a hilltop and they, in turn, occupied the hilltop. They had broken the cease-fire agreement. Whereupon Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma called me and said: "John, should I call for a B-52 air strike?" At this time, there were no more regular air strikes and I told the Prime Minister: "If we have an air strike, we will kill the Pathet Lao on the top of the hill. They would be off the top of the hill and the Royal Lao Army would reoccupy that hilltop. But I fear that one week later, the Pathet Lao would come back and expell the Royal Lao Army from the hilltop. We would be back at the same point. Personally. I would not break the cease-fire on the B-52 raids just for this small incident. We are so close to the negotiation of a Lao coalition government which would end the hostilities that I would recommend that you do not call for an air strike." Before executing an air strike by American bombers we usually had to have the prior approval of the Prime Minister. I went back to the Embassy and reported this conversation by telegram through State Department channels. In return. I received an official reprimand from the Secretary of State, which is in my Foreign Service file, for not having asked for instructions from the State Department. I still believe that, when you are in the kitchen,

you have not always got the time to ask the big chief how to handle an immediate problem. You just do your best.

Q: While we are on the subject of bombings, in the first place, you mentioned sometime back that we had tried the bombing pause. Could you explain what the effect of that was as a try-on? After Godley left, were you picking up the bombing side of things?

DEAN: By the summer of 1973 bombing by U.S. aircraft in Laos had stopped for all practical purposes. Public pressure in the United States and the opposition by a number of Senators and Congressmen had severely reduced B-52 strikes in Laos. Many legislators had come to Laos and seen for themselves that the bombing was a two-edged sword. While it may have saved a particular military situation for the moment, quite often it turned the local civilian population into violent opponents of the United States. This also happened in Cambodia. It is difficult to explain to the little guys on the ground that suddenly they get bombed, their cattle gets killed, and they have personal losses, but that this destruction carried out by a foreign nation is in the overall interests of the country. Not all bombs hit their target. The bombing halt undoubtedly helped me to negotiate the settlement in Laos. Had bombing been resumed, it would have been tantamount to admitting that negotiations had failed and did not lead to an end of hostilities.

Q: While the negotiations were going on, you had your 600-odd Americans there, many of whom were involved in supporting the war effort. We had Thai troops in there, in Laotian uniforms. We had tribesmen. In a way, this whole apparatus was geared for war. Here you were, trying to negotiate a peace. For some of these people, war was their profession, including the Americans. I would have thought it would be a little hard to reign them in.

DEAN: When you negotiate, you also have to have some way of putting pressure on your adversary to promote your point of view in the negotiations.

I made a distinction between U.S./Thai support for Meo Hill Tribes fighting themselves against the Pathet Lao/North Vietnam, and the Royal Lao Armed Forces opposing the Pathet Lao. The support for the Meo was handled exclusively by the Central Intelligence Agency. Quite often, I joined my CIA colleagues in visits to Meo villages to better understand what was the situation on the ground. But in serious negotiations, one can do two things simultaneously: fight and negotiate. I put the emphasis on negotiation. My analysis at that point was that time was not on the side of the Royal Lao Government in pursuing warfare, and therefore I placed my emphasis on moving rapidly on negotiations.

Q: Could you talk about Henry Kissinger when he came and some other government officials? There must have been a lot of consultation. Did Henry Kissinger share with you the idea that time was not on our side?

DEAN: No. On that issue, we did not see eye to eye. The instructions I had been given by Dr. Kissinger when I left for Cambodia in early 1974 was "Go and fight. Don't get yourself involved in negotiations." To the best of my knowledge. Dr. Kissinger does not believe that the people in the field have a sufficient grasp of the global picture, nor the contacts, to negotiate a solution. In Laos, it was somewhat different: the local Lao factions were negotiating among themselves and we were just "facilitators". It is quite possible that elements in Washington supported my efforts with other important players, and perhaps even Dr. Kissinger was among them. When what you do appears to lead to positive results, others jump on the bandwagon. Dr. Kissinger and I have had a strange relationship. We have similar backgrounds. I admire Dr. Kissinger's keen intellect. Today, historians and pundits are a lot more critical of Dr. Kissinger than in the 1970s when Henry Kissinger was on the cover

of TIME MAGAZINE as superman. It is a fact that you see a problem differently when you are on the ground as a field Commander than when you are in Washington and look at the overall picture. Any differences which may have existed between Dr. Kissinger and myself are largely a difference of perception. If you are on the ground and you see what's going on, you hear what people are saying, and you see the battle fatigue of the civilians and the fighting forces, you come to one conclusion. Therefore, as Field Commander, I may have had a more parochial vision compared to Dr. Kissinger who looked at the same issue from the global point of view – which might include how the Chinese felt about it, where the Soviets stood on developments, and how did Laos fit into the overall picture of containing communism.

In bringing about a negotiated solution in Laos, I had the full support of the French Ambassador, André Ross, who went on to be Ambassador in Japan, India, and Secretary General at the French Foreign Office. I had the impression that the Soviet Ambassador to Laos also favored emphasis on negotiations. As far as I know, no efforts were made to throw a monkey wrench into our efforts to find a negotiated solutions. The Australian Ambassador also was helpful. In Vientiane, I felt that I had the support of some other foreign missions. Not getting much guidance from Washington, I did not feel completely isolated. It probably reinforced my tendency to take decisions without asking too many questions or solliciting advice from Washington.

Q: Can we talk a bit about the media in Laos? What was your impression of media interest and reporting there?

DEAN: I met many journalists – foreign and American – who were to follow me into Cambodia. The lady who wrote the book "The Fall of Phnom Penh",

Dieudonnee Tan Berge, was a Dutch journalist in Laos and later in Cambodia. She interviewed me years later on her book on Indochina. She, as most journalists, was witness to what was going on. They saw the suffering of the civilian populations. Representatives of the non-governmental agencies and the International Red Cross had an accurate evaluation of the destruction, the battle fatigue of the civilian population, and they sympathized with the Lao people. On the whole in Laos, I felt that the media was not unfriendly. Certainly, the European press was not unfriendly. Yet, by the end of 1973, Laos was a side-show. Everybody was focusing on Vietnam. By 1973, the resident journalists, and even visiting press people, were not hostile to my efforts to press for a negotiated solution. Some were even helpful!

A final word about Laos. The Lao got caught in a war not of their choosing, first by the French, and then by the United States. They certainly did not want Vietnamese occupation or communist ideology. They are a rather smiling, friendly, docile, uncomplicated people, who quickly gained the hearts of most foreigners who served there. They are not impulsive warriors. Most of them are not great intellectuals, but they have a lifestyle and a Buddhist approach to life which endears then to many people. They lived in a different era from the rest of their neighbors. More isolated today, Laos, still under communist-inspired leadership, is very much linked to the more dynamic Thai society. Helping to make peace was one of the most satisfying moments in my professional life. My wife and I still have some Lao friends. Fortunately, only a few Lao suffered after the 1975 communist take-over. Some of our friends found safety in France and in the United States.

Laos was first caught in a struggle between Japan and Western colonialism. Then, reoccupation by the former colonial power. Then, war between

France and Vietnamese communist expansionism; and finally, U.S. efforts to contain Vietnamese communism. Lao independence did not bring economic development nor modernity as envisioned by the Lao elite. War and conflict were the order of the day for more than 25 years for most of the rural population. Even after the American withdrawal from Indochina, Laos did not participate in the economic boom that characterized the 1980s and 1990s in Southeast Asia.

Prince Souvanna Phouma, son of the Viceroy of Laos, saw the problem, not only what was best for the well educated elite but what he thought was best for the great majority of the Lao rural population. The solution of a coalition government with the communist Pathet Lao was probably the best solution possible at the time 1973. It did not last once South Vietnam was taken over completely by the North and the Khmer Rouge entered Phnom Penh. The Indochina conflict was also a struggle for independence, without foreign interference. The interim coalition government solution which we helped to broker in 1973 led to a complete takeover by the Pathet Lao of the country in 1975. But the basic problem remains of taking a very under-developed society and country and bringing it into the modern world. For that task, the Laos of today still needs the West, including the United States. Whether Laos has a a communist government or a non-communist regime does not really matter. Laos needs the know-how and the capital to develop its potential, and for that it must look to the West, Japan, and its more advanced neighbors in Southeast Asia.

Q: Let's move to Cambodia. How did your Cambodian assignment develop? You left Laos in October 1973.

DEAN: I stayed on with Ambassador Whitehouse in Laos for a very short

period of time. It must have been in November that I left Laos for the last time. I never returned to that country, even after retirement from the Foreign Service, despite many invitations from Phoumi Vong Vichit who was President of Laos by that time.

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